

| Acknowledgments

In my view, nothing that we achieve is done by ourselves. Even though one person may have the main role, or be pushing the idea forward, there is always a collective effort. Influences, collaborations and inspirations come from different persons, from various places, affecting and shaping - in this case - my research. From formal interactions to informal talks, or just sharing a moment to sit back and reflect, I owe my thoughts, words and work to all the different people that walked with me during the different parts of this process.

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To all the members of Dodo's urban farmers group, who shared with me time, thoughts, garden and kitchen. The ones that gave me the time to interview them, I thank especially. I truly hope that the voices, experiences and approaches that Dodo pursue with their work around food are represented in these pages.

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Preface

During an internship at Polimi DESIS Lab in 2014, I had the opportunity to explore the concept of ‘Design for social innovation and sustainability’ in new ways. Polimi DESIS Lab is one of the labs of the Design for Social Innovation Network (DESIIS). During that time I also started understanding the challenges that many social innovations encounter, in particular the ones grassroots projects encounter due to their more organic structures. Even though it was clear from the beginning that supporting such initiatives was important, I started wondering how?

During my time in Milan working with the research team of the Polimi DESIS Lab, one of my main tasks was to contribute to the DESIS Food Cluster initiative: a blog showcasing transdisciplinary knowledge through examples from different global DESIS Labs around food-related social innovation initiatives. During this time, I started to develop an interest in investigating and understanding food issues as a research topic.

While exploring ideas about social innovation, the concept of storytelling caught my attention, and which I started developing with a course at the Department of Media and Graphic Design. I understood the potential that storytelling could have to spread these grassroots movements’ work (Manzini, 2015), and also to help others understand their potential for social innovation.

I began my exploration into grassroots in Helsinki by engaging and volunteering in different activities, from student projects to activist seminars. As part of this exploration I approached the case study to be introduced in this thesis: the urban environmental organization Dodo. My relationship

with Dodo’s urban farmers group began through my volunteering in their ‘experimental centre’ and cafe Turntable (which I know mainly by its Finnish name: Kääntöpöytä), a greenhouse built on the unused railway turntable of the Pasila station. Although this group was part of my research from the start, it was only when I got to know their activities better that I decided to use it as my case study. From the beginning, my engagement has been based on participating, looking, helping and learning, rather than coming up with propositions for them. Sometimes my contribution to their work was giving a hand when required, even in the simplest tasks. The information you will find here was collected by engaging with the group and their activities.

This thesis tells the story of Dodo’s urban farmers group, and of their work in developing more sustainable food production and consumption, predominantly in Helsinki. You will learn about what they have done, what they are doing, and what they are planning to do. What you will see in this document is a visual narrative that I built by trying to understand and share their story, in what I intend to be an honest and respectful way. For me, this is an important story that needs to be shared; an inspiring alternative narrative started by citizens who are creating change and making an impact on their circumstances, on their own terms.

| Table of contents

Acknowledgments	2
Abstract	4
Preface	6
 Chapter 1 Introduction	 10
1.1 Objectives and research question	20
 Chapter 2 What are alternative narratives?	 22
2.1 Alternative narratives for cities through collective action: grassroots social innovation initiatives	25
2.1.1 Grassroots social innovation: one way of naming the alternatives	26
2.1.2 Citizens' collective actions and their interactions: from the past to the present day	29
2.2 Design and alternative narratives for cities	33
2.2.1 Design towards sustainability	35
2.2.2 Designers working with alternatives	37
2.2.3 Visual narratives: supporting alternatives in cities	40
2.3 Summary and conclusions	46
 Chapter 3 Helsinki as a place for alternatives	 48
3.1 Food culture in Helsinki: aiming towards a more sustainable food culture	52
3.2 Grassroots social innovation, design and food culture in Helsinki	55
 Chapter 4 Methods	 58

Chapter 5 An alternative narrative around food in Helsinki: Dodo's urban farmers group	68
5.1 Background of the urban farmers group	70
5.1.1 Dodo ry	70
5.1.2 Dodo and sustainable food production: Dodo's urban farmers group	72
5.1.3 What do I need to know before reading the story?	74
5.2 How did things grow?	75
5.2.1 Experimenting with urban farming	76
5.2.2 Growing and materializing	81
5.2.3 Facing production, harvesting, and looking forward	90
5.3 What made things grow?	99
5.3.1 What kind of activities do they do?	99
5.3.2 What is an activity card?	101
5.3.3 Examples of activity cards	103
5.4 How is the harvest? What could be cooked with it?	106
5.4.1 How is the harvest?	106
5.4.2 What could be cooked with it?	118
 Chapter 6 Discussion and Conclusions	 128
6.1 Reflections, limitations and further research	136
 References	 140
Appendix	154
Interviews	154
Full inventory of activity cards	156
Process of analysis of activity cards	169
Analysis of activity cards with Interaction maps	169
Analysis around 'shaping urban dynamics'	172
Initial analysis identifying three larger themes	172
Activity at Dodo's ORG days	173
Further analysis: feedback and my own evaluation	175
Timeline	178

Chapter 1 | Introduction

This research explores alternative narratives about food in Helsinki that have been developed by grassroots social innovation initiatives. These initiatives are proposing and experimenting with new activities to move towards more sustainable lifestyles. This research-based thesis is an invitation to look deeper into what grassroots social innovation initiatives are doing to create change, and how they are doing it. The initiative researched here is one of those working with food issues: working towards more sustainable food production and consumption. Grassroots social innovation initiatives propose alternative narratives to the mainstream, taking action towards more sustainable behaviours and lifestyle. By looking at a case study - Dodo's urban farmers group - this study presents a 'visual narrative' to understand the initiative's motives, the actors they engage and the activities that they propose.

The contemporary world is being challenged by environmental devastation, social inequality, population growth, and an aging population. Concerns regarding our relationship with the environment have been increasing on a global level, among regions, countries, governments, public and private actors. New sustainable development goals were proposed to be adopted by world leaders in 2015 (UN, 2015), who committed to work to reach these 17 goals by 2030. The twelfth goal refers to Responsible Consumption and Production, stressing the need to develop habits supporting sustainable consumption and production. This goal emphasize the relevance of altering attitudes towards sustainable, responsible producer and consumer behaviour. The intention is for this objective to be reached by involving, in a participative way, various stakeholders along the value and supply chain from

producers to consumers (e.g. business, consumers, policy makers, researchers, scientists and citizens). Similarly, this concern about changing current lifestyles is manifested by the European Commission, who point out the importance of the 'profound' changes in behaviour and thinking that need to be undertaken by society as a whole (European Commission, 2015).

As it becomes necessary for more and more people to share the same planet and resources, addressing our personal lifestyle choices becomes of central concern in responding to these challenges. Lifestyle is the way a person lives: it is not just their daily routines and choices; it also encapsulates what is important to that person, their opinions and behaviours as individual, and their relationship to an environment.

Different actors are attempting to reach and encourage sustainable development in different ways, from different perspectives, and on differing scales. Social innovation is one of the ways people are seeking to find new answers to major social problems. Through social innovation citizens are creating their own ways to provide the kind of services they want, involving local and socially sustainable methods such as community gardens and farm-to-table food options. For this thesis, social innovation is seen as the reconfiguration of existing resources into something identifiably new, even though many of the bases of such reconfiguration are pre-existing and were created many generations ago (e.g. urban agriculture). Social innovations can take different forms and levels, and can be more or less organized: some might appear like a business, while others look more like a neighbours' gathering. The focus in my study is on grassroots social innovations: these less organized, more organic initiatives, with a citizen-driven nature. They are experimenting in achieving

sustainable development away from the mainstream (Seyfang & Smith, 2007) by changing behaviour and attitudes.

Grassroots movements are one of the various ways needed to tackle environmental and socially complex challenges. As grassroots are locally-based solutions, they help to change behaviour in their surrounding community. Hence, they contribute in their own way to shape more sustainable lifestyles within a close context. This research explores ways in which these initiatives propose alternative methods, by employing activities which push current practices around food into more sustainable directions.

Sustainable food production and consumption are among the main targets to reach for sustainable development in general (EU, 2015; FAO, 2015, UN, 2015). Food is among the major causes of CO₂ emissions because of current production and consumption (e.g. monoculture agriculture, overconsumption, etc) (EU, 2015). Additionally, food is a core aspect of a person's lifestyle, and is fundamentally connected to basic human needs in terms of nourishment, and physical and cognitive development. However, there is also the ways in which food connects to cities, culture, economics and social interactions.

To understand the complexity of food choices and the environmental problems associated with them (FAO, 2015; EU, 2015), an overview of the food system is necessary. The food system encapsulates all of the different processes related to food, from production ("the field") to consumption ("the table") (Eriksen, 2007). Such a system carries with it problems that include, for example, CO₂ emissions caused by production and distribution (Eriksen, 2007; EU, 2015), and the ways in which natural resources - such as land and water - are used (EU, 2015).

Food production relates to the growth or alternative creation of food. Agriculture - among the main methods of producing food, and described as one of the biggest technological developments (Montanari, 2006) - changed the relationship of humans with space and also to each other. From the beginning of human history, food was crucial in the development and structure of society and cities (Steel, 2008). However, production of food is not just about agriculture. Other technological development regarding food production improved not just the processes of food production - better and more cost-effective processed food - but also influenced behaviours, for example through ready-made meals (Catterall, 1999) or consumption because of worldwide food distribution expanding the 'limiting' local food options (Montanari, 2006).

Production is intertwined with consumption. Consumption relates to the choices that individuals make regarding food. These choices span different aspects of consumption: from the moment of purchase, method of transport, storage, and the way in which we prepare or cook and eat it (FAO, 2015). In addition, consumption is not only related to the basic biological need of eating, but to what the food means to us (carrying cultural and social signifiers) (Pollan, 2006). Understanding these different aspects of the consumption of food emphasizes that it is more complex than simply a case of 'buying and eating'.

Sustainable food production and consumption plays an important role in achieving sustainable development (EU, 2015; FAO, 2015, UN, 2015). Goals set by the United Nations, world exhibitions, and national or regional food strategies could help to reach this point. UN goals for sustainable food production include a focus on "resilient" agricultural practices (the second goal), while targets for the reduction of food waste

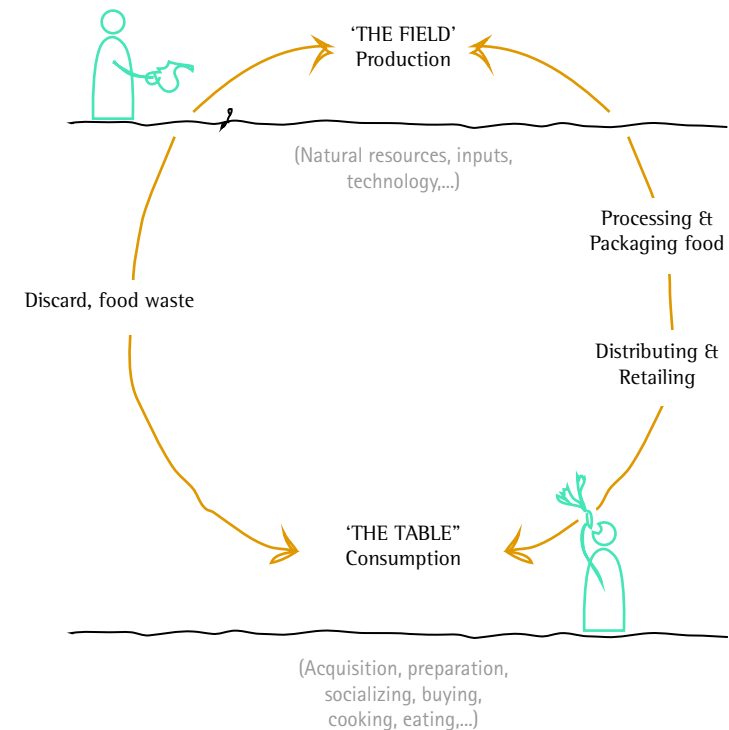


Figure 01: My visual interpretation of food system activities by Ericksen, 2007.

is part of the twelfth goal, for sustainable consumption and production (UN, 2015). The world exhibition in Milan during 2015, under the title 'Feeding the planet, Energy for life', was intended as a milestone for food and sustainability discussion (EU, 2016). One of the main outcomes from the Expo was the 'Milan Urban Policy Pact': "an international protocol [...] based on the principles of sustainability and social justice", which engages international parties to coordinate food policies aiming toward sustainability (Milano Food Policy, 2016). Strategies regarding food and sustainability are being developed in different countries and cities around Europe, for example in Bristol and London (see UK Food Strategy, Bristol Good Food, URBACT, Capital Growth London).

Actions in opposition to contemporary industrialized, globalized and unsustainable food systems take different forms: from organic agriculture (production), to the organisation of neighborhood dinners (consumption). Alternative approaches to food will be taken, in this thesis, as movements of people coming together to do something to alter current food provision, and to modify existing notions of urban ‘food culture’. Some examples of these alternatives occur in initiatives such as the slow food movement, dumpster-diving dinners, and so on.

Examples of grassroots innovation relating to food include, for instance, organic farming cooperatives, which can not only change the way people consume and understand the production of food, but may also affect the “social infrastructure of food supply” (Pretty, 2002: Seyfang, 2006, cited by Seyfang & Smith, 2007). Also, other counteractions questioning food production have an important impact on food activism - such as the guerrilla gardening movement. Started in 1970, guerrilla gardening is referred to by Johnson (2010, 158) as “a communicative act”.

Self-initiated and -promoted urban agriculture is one of the ways in which people are attempting to address food differently, and to understand the actions required for a more sustainable lifestyle. Urban agriculture does not solely concern food, but also use of space. One of the practice’s primary characteristics is that it promotes food and locality, as well as self-provision (Du Puis & Goodman, 2005). Urban gardening could be taken as guerrilla or community gardening, yet it entails more formal methods of farming, and has notable potential for sustainable food production (UNDP, 1996).

Although they are limited in reach and scale, grassroots social innovation initiatives around food contribute to change current food culture norms because of their potential to influence ways in which people relate to and think about food. This thesis explores ways in which grassroots initiatives are attempting to tackle food problems by working towards more sustainable food production and consumption; how they learn, collaborate with others, and share what they do. Through their activities, grassroots social innovation initiatives propose alternative narratives about food production and people’s consumption.

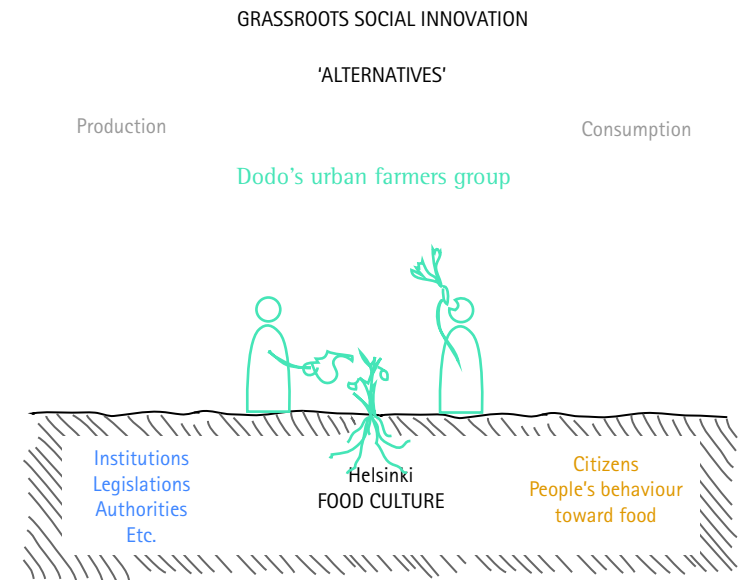


Figure 02: Helsinki food culture: production and consumption patterns, their actors and the alternatives trying to encourage more sustainable food production and consumption ideas.

The selected case study, Dodo’s urban farmers group, is part of an urban environmental Finnish organization working towards greater sustainability of food production and consumption in Helsinki. Dodo ry, with the urban farmers group

and its experimental centre and Turntable (Kääntöpöytä) cafe, is a clear example of the proposals citizens are developing to start a conversation about the current food situation in the city. Helsinki is seen as an important capital, with increasing citizen involvement and engagement (Helsinki Quarterly, 2014; Hernberg, 2012; Viljanen, Poikola & Koponen, 2012; Synder & Zappia, 2016). To understand the Finnish capital as a context for grassroots social innovation initiatives related to food, I will introduce developments in activism and strategies and actions about food in the city, and how citizens' actions are allowing grassroots social innovations to grow. I selected a case study based in Helsinki to better understand how citizen participation and action are contributing to recreate and reshape the urban culture of the city in which I currently live.

Narrative, according to the Oxford dictionary (Oxford, 2016) is a "spoken or written account of connected events; a story". People have always told stories to understand the world, its events, and the people related to them. Stories are one of the main ways that we share experiences with others. Using narrative as a research approach helps me to place importance on the story of the initiative, as well as putting it in context (Crouch & Pearce, 2012). Therefore, the intention of this study is to tell the story of the initiative while relating it strongly to its context. Actors of the initiative are key elements of the narrative; those proposing action and taking it further. However, the time and space in which they act influences the kind of narrative they build: how successful or otherwise they are, and with whom and how they interact.

To understand and share this grassroots social innovation initiative's story, I propose to build a visual narrative using a method which explores the content and the role of their story.

The content of the narrative develops the initiative's story, first by telling it, under the title How did things grow?; then, What made things grow? focuses on the activities the group proposes. How is the harvest? analyses what the group has done and how they influenced the Helsinki food culture, by understanding the actual role of the initiative, and, finally, What could be cooked with it? presents options for future roles suggested by possible reconfigurations.

This research is an invitation to understand and share, through a visual narrative, what Dodo's urban farmers group proposes as alternatives aiming towards more sustainable food production and consumption in Helsinki.

1.1 | Objectives and research question

My objective in carrying out this project is to learn about grassroots social innovation initiatives and their activities. I believe this is an important step in order to explore how to help and support the people running or trying to create grassroots social innovations; either directly or indirectly way. The research approach has been qualitative, combining different methods to gather materials around a particular initiative, which is then analysed as a case study. The materials have been collected through semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and literature review. I use narrative and visualizations to present, tell the story and analyse the material of the selected initiative. Through this, I aim to recognize the importance of these initiatives, and how they work and develop. When using narratives I place special attention on contextualizing their story, by taking into account time, space, and interactions. My hypothesis is that by creating a visual narrative to communicate grassroots social innovations activities, interactions, and previous experiences, a more nuanced understanding of such activities should be possible, and possibly the enabling and envisioning of other interactions or synergies that could support them.

Research question

What kind of 'alternative' narratives do grassroots social innovations initiatives develop towards more sustainable lifestyles, and what kind of 'visual' narrative could be produced to present and analyse them?

I attempt to answer this question through engagement with and research into Dodo's urban farmers group. The case study builds a visual narrative to understand the activities of this grassroots social innovation initiative within its immediate context, by focusing on presenting and analyzing the story of the group, while identifying the varied activities that they utilise to create awareness and introduce greater sustainability into Helsinki food culture.

My starting point was that by analysing their narrative I would be able to identify and understand the ways in which they interact with and influence top-down and bottom-up approaches. More specifically:

- interactions with fellow citizens and other activists, and how this could influence behaviour and relationships towards food in Helsinki
- interactions with institutions (authorities such as the municipality of the City of Helsinki, etc), strategies and legislation around food; as well as if these could lead to influence food production and consumption in Helsinki.

Chapter 2 | What are alternative narratives?

“For a long time, the main strategy for addressing unsustainable consumption patterns and levels has relied on technological innovation. Recent research contributions highlight the need to identify, stimulate and scale-up social innovation initiatives that complement technical innovation by changing the way in which everyday life is organized and in which we define well-being and quality of life and create our individual and collective identities”

(Jackson, 2005 and Seyfang, 2009 in Mont, Neuvonen and Lähteenoja, 2013, pp 25).

The focus for the literature reviewed is on understanding what ‘alternative’ narratives citizens are proposing in order to alter the current food situation to a more sustainable one. However, to understand what these alternatives are pursuing it is necessary to give a brief explanation of sustainable lifestyles and, specifically, their connection to more sustainable food production and consumption.

Sustainable lifestyles concern individual and collective choices in daily life which are responsible and respectful towards the environment. Those lifestyles need to be diverse, reflecting human needs in terms of balanced well-being (eg, including both work and personal life) (Mont, Neuvonen and Lähteenoja, 2013). In other words, more sustainable consumption and production patterns need to be pursued (UN, 2015), considering that in Europe, for instance, ‘household consumption’ (food, housing and transport) (Mont, Neuvonen and Lähteenoja, 2013) creates a large impact. The need to rethink ways in which production and consumption are currently undertaken reflects the concern about the increasing global population and the impact that this could have if we maintain our current lifestyles (UN, 2015). Hence, the different actors within the food system - both those that produce and those that consume - need to not only be considered, but also engaged in this profoundly necessary change of behaviour.

The alternatives upon which I focus here attempt to change this current system of food production and consumption, altering or disrupting it with more sustainable practices. These grassroots social innovation practices demand to be shared (Seyfang & Smith, 2007; Mont, Neuvonen and Lähteenoja,

2013) because their experiments disseminate new experiences, views and knowledge about possible sustainable lifestyles.

To learn about these alternatives, I initially needed to understand them. Therefore, the first section of the literature explores the idea of alternatives, beginning with grassroots activities and social innovation in general; two different but complementary concepts that help define citizen-driven innovations focusing on social issues. I will provide an overview of grassroots social innovation literature, and of citizens coming together to challenge and alter the current state of their city or environment through collective action.

The second section of this chapter is dedicated to providing context about the relationship of design to these ‘alternatives’; how designers are working towards sustainability, and the relationship they have with grassroots social innovation initiatives. I will introduce examples of large networks of designers working with these issues: DESIS Labs and the MEDEA living lab. The section ends by framing the importance of visualizations in support of ‘alternatives’, giving some examples which act as references for my work.

2.1 | Alternative narratives for cities through collective action: grassroots social innovation initiatives

“Cities are living systems, made, transformed and experienced by people.”

(Castells, 1983)

Here I will lay out the concept of ‘grassroots social innovation initiatives’. Grassroots activities and social innovation coincide in many ways, while differing in others; they cannot be encapsulated by a single definition, despite both relating to citizen-driven movements. Therefore, I will review different authors’ perspectives on grassroots activities and social innovation, and explain the importance of combining them for my study. After introducing the idea of grassroots social innovation, I will provide a brief overview of ways alternatives of this kind have interacted with cities, from the past to the present day.

The literary sources I have used vary from political sciences and environmental studies (Seyfang and Smith, 2007), to urban social movements (Castells, 1983), urban studies (Mayer, 2006, 2013), social innovation (Mulgan et al, 2007; Phills Jr., Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008; Murray, Caulier-Grice, & Mulgan, 2010; Tepsie, 2014), design (Meroni, 2007; Mazé, 2014; Manzini, 2015), and information, communications technologies and society (Carty, 2010).

2.1.1 | Grassroots social innovation: one way of naming the alternatives

Grassroots initiatives are considered alternative methods (Meroni, 2007; Seyfang & Smith, 2007; Manzini, 2015) which, through experimentation by citizens, develop new activities which push society's beliefs and concerns forward. They attempt to generate solutions that are not currently contemplated by the traditional system or mainstream; they go against and provoke changes in the current system. Grassroots innovations, according to Seyfang and Smith (2007, pp 585), are "networks of activists and organisations generating novel bottom-up solutions for sustainable development". In other words, they are groups of citizens proposing new, more sustainable practices for daily living. Those who drive them are primarily community oriented, meaning that the solutions proposed take into account not only the people involved but also the local context, by using "contextualized knowledge" (Seyfang & Smith, 2007). The strong sense of locality integral to grassroots movements (in how they organize and approach their problems) can therefore help to alter current behaviours in their communities or localities (Seyfang & Smith, 2007; Manzini, 2015). They experiment within 'civil society', whereby they can propose social innovations or even 'greener' technological innovations (Seyfang and Smith, 2007). As such, the contribution this type of innovation brings to its close context and daily actions is an important resource for the social fabric.

So, if grassroots themselves can propose social innovations, how do these two concepts differ? Social innovations are also ways in which citizens work together. In the 'Open Book for Social Innovation', social innovation is defined as: "new

ideas (products, services and models) that simultaneously meet social needs and create new social relationships or collaborations. In other words, they are innovation[s] that are both good for society and enhance society's capacity to act" (Murray, Caulier-Grice, & Mulgan, 2010; pp 3).

Social innovation is a type of innovation that addresses social needs (Mulgan et al, 2007; Mazé, 2014; Manzini, 2014; Tepsie, 2014). However, it differs from innovation in general, as "it can also be a principle, an idea, a piece of legislation, a social movement, an intervention, or some combination of them" (Phills Jr., Deiglmeier, & Miller, 2008). In line with Manzini (2014), Mazé (2014) and Mulgan et al (2007), I will refer to social innovation as the re-configuration of resources into new concepts, services, products or models that pursue social goals. Social innovations seek answers to societal problems that are often not addressed by public services or governments. This kind of innovation entails a process of change where individuals from various levels of society (citizens, consumers, professionals) come together, modifying social interaction and activities, their systems, beliefs and sometimes even authority.

Returning to the idea of 'grassroots' activities, I use the term similarly: as spontaneous or organic movements, organizations or networks of citizens which attempt to provide community-led answers to certain societal problems.

So, why combine these terms? 'Grassroots' emphasizes a spontaneous or organic nature, while 'social innovation' stresses the social aspect of the problems they attempt to tackle, the solutions they intend to provide, and even their view of such problems and solutions.

Grassroots social innovation develops around varied pressing social issues, such as housing, education, health, transport, and food. Seyfang and Smith (2007, pp 585) claim that “the grassroots [are] a neglected site of innovation for sustainability”. From the open processes and engagement of citizens, research around grassroots and social innovation is growing (Mulgan et al, 2007; Seyfang & Smith, 2007; Mayer, 2013; Tepsie, 2014). However, it should be noted that although grassroots social innovations are important assets for experimentation, they only represent one way in which to head towards the diverse solutions necessary for sustainable lifestyles (Seyfang & Smith, 2007).

Both grassroots and social innovation can be founded in many ways, while their structures and organization varies between informal community groups and more structured social enterprises (Mulgan et al, 2007; Seyfang & Smith, 2007). Additionally, both may begin as ground-up citizen endeavours, challenging the current mainstream to adopt practices which might then become widespread (Tepsie, 2014). However, it is important to note that having a social innovation become ‘institutionalised’ does not suggest that the work is done - rather, it perhaps needs to be refreshed itself by subsequent innovations (ibid).

I also use the term ‘social innovation’ as a strategy. Interest in social innovation is expanding in various fields, from public policy to community development (Mulgan et al, 2007), as is funding for research in this area (Mazé, 2014). This interest can be demonstrated by the European Commission’s support of social innovation and research on various different levels. To further illustrate the growing interest in people and organizations working with social innovation, I will reference organizations like the Youth Foundation in London, and

Nesta, an ‘innovation charity’, which promote and support social innovation in the UK. Additionally, networks like the Social Innovation Exchange (SIX) allow people to collaborate and exchange ideas and experiences around social innovation (Mulgan, with Tucker, Ali, & Sanders, 2007)

2.1.2 | Citizens' collective actions and their interactions: from the past to the present day

Following Castells (1983) and Mayer (2013) in attempting to understand how present-day citizens engage in ‘contemporary urban activism’ (or what I call ‘alternatives’), I will provide an overview of how past decades have contributed to its evolution. Here I will attempt to demonstrate the different relationships and interactions that such alternative experimentation has with institutions and authorities, as well as the ways in which today’s technological innovations, such as the internet and communication through social media, have impacted on their organizations’ interaction (see also Carty, 2010).

Another subject discussed here will be the importance of these alternatives in shaping urban dynamics (Castells, 1983; Mayer, 2006, 2013).

During the 1960s and 70s, politicized movements against industrialization and the “Fordist model” were created and manifested in many ways: in Europe mainly through youth and student activities, while in the US they came from marginalised groups, for example African Americans (Castells, 1983; Mayer, 2013). During this period, environmental organizations such as Greenpeace started protesting against issues

like US nuclear weapons testing, showing a rising concern and engagement around environmental issues. The struggle against governments and the market was intense.

By the 1980s, budget constraints made local governments shift their outlook and start to relate more to social movements (Mayer, 2013). However, social expressions against globalization continued, giving rise to new movements like 'slow food' in Italy, which initially manifested in opposition to the intention of McDonald's to open an outlet in Rome (Slowfood, 2015).

On one hand, opposition toward the mainstream reached a milestone during the 1990s with the Seattle World Organization protests in 1999; public protests against globalization, leading markets and trade liberalization (Britannica, 2016). On the other hand, many of the early experimental community action approaches began to develop into more structured organizations, becoming part of mainstream "activation programs", rather than challenging it (Mayer, 2013). Currently, the ways in which people organize in order to express their discontent toward pressing social issues are changing: many activist protests are organized online, mainly through social media, and their aims may be less political (Carty, 2010).

Since the 1960s, social movements have fought for civil rights and were, as such, involved in the political sphere; now, as Mayer (2013) explains, some scholars suggest that a change from the political to the cultural and civil society has taken place within these movements.

During the 80s, Castells (1983) highlighted the importance of grassroots social action in shaping 'urban dynamics', so as to create an alternative city.

He identified two levels that social action could affect (Castells, 1983). The first related to changes in ways of working (international and inter-regional), changes in consumption (increasing collective consumption), and the importance of the commons (public goods) (ibid). The second level focused on people, and how they expressed their discontent with institutions through protest and movements attempting to alter the idea of 'the urban', pursuing something closer to culture and identity (ibid). Looking back at what Castell stated about the social levels that grassroots could affect, Mayer (2006) emphasised the importance and relevance collective consumption still has, highlighting the criticism about civic engagement discourse which stresses support, while actual practice still contains many limitations (Mayer, 2006).

However, more recently Mayer (2013) suggested that the traditional "conceptual and theoretical framework" is outdated, as urban movements and actions have changed how they operate and manufacture impact. She also introduced the particularities of the new urban movements of what she calls "first world cities", suggesting that urbanization had impacted the social sphere generating displacement, polarization and increased fragmentation (Mayer, 2013). Nonetheless, these urban movement groups began to be presented with "concessions and offerings" from institutions and local authorities, because city authorities (like local politics or city marketing) started seeing them as potential "partners" with which to develop a creative city (ibid).

"[C]reative city politics" are one of the reasons why many alternatives have been boosted into the mainstream: they help cities to improve their image by modifying urban cultural content in new and creative ways (ibid). However, the 'regeneration programmes' that the cities propose, integrating

to some extent alternative proposals, are “designed to encourage activation and self responsabilization rather than political empowerment” (Mayer, 2013, pp 12). Hence, contemporary movements are not only less radical than those from the past, but their political presence is also weaker.

2.2 | Design and alternative narratives for cities

“[D]esign is arguably a discipline that synthesizes knowledge from across the natural and social sciences and applies it into solving complex technical and social problems. These dimensions of design are apparent in its expanding roles in sustainable development”

(Mazé, 2013, pp 83)

Design discipline and design professionals have long been questioning their activities in connection to the market and the mainstream. In 1971, Papanek’s book *Design for the Real World* claimed that designers should look in a direction other than the market and growth. However, Julier (2013a) points out that it took many years to “design responsibly”, and to make design more democratic, rather than simply competitive. Design discipline has expanded from working with things (products) and symbols (graphics), to working with action (how products and graphics enable action) and environment and systems (when and where interactions occur) (Buchanan, 2001).

This work focuses upon the ‘new orders of design’ activity (action, environment and system). Design is considered to have the potential to influence social change (Fuad-Luke, 2009; Manzini, 2015) - hence, designers have been shifting their practice towards sustainability and social awareness, for instance ‘design for social innovation’ and ‘design activism’ (Meroni, 2007; Fuad-Luke, 2009; Julier, 2013b; Markussen, 2013; Mazé, 2013; Manzini, 2015).

	Symbols	Things	Action	Thought
Symbols	Graphic Design			
Things		Industrial Design		
Action			Interaction Design	
Thought				Environmental Design

Figure 03: Four orders of design, Richard Buchanan, 2001

But why is design engaging with alternatives and activism? Design as a profession has shifted its aims and methods (abandoning redefinition of well-being and collaborative working methods); some designers are neither willing to continue working in market-driven jobs, nor to disregard ethical concerns (Julier, 2013b). Circumstances also support design for social innovation and design activism, as there is a need for new ideas and approaches which can envision sustainable futures in opposition to the environmental, social and economical problems caused by the current systems of production and consumption. The technological development regarding information technology plays an important role in these approaches because it enables the creation of networks, and supports the dissemination of information and knowledge via internet and social media (Fuad-Luke, 2009; Manzini, 2015).

Furthermore, the shift that policy regarding ‘sustainability governance’ in Europe has experienced, in increasingly considering ‘bottom-up’ approaches and citizen participation

(Mazé, 2013), means these design approaches may play an important role in supporting this more grassroots-sympathetic governance.

To better understand ways design can work with citizens, and its political implications, designers have been combining their practices with research so as to increase knowledge and create dialogue about it with others. I will introduce the examples of the DESIS international network, and Medea in Malmö; both of which attempt to tackle complex social challenges by working in collaboration with citizens and engaging with alternatives they propose. In addition, I will address the role that visualizations have in this kind of design work and/or research.

2.2.1 | Design towards sustainability

The focus of this research is on examples of design working towards sustainability by addressing social, economical and environmental problems: approaches such as ‘design for social innovation’ (Meroni, 2007; Mazé, 2014; Manzini, 2015) and ‘design activism’ (Fuad-Luke, 2009; Julier, 2013a, 2013b; Markussen, 2013). These approaches are not specific to any design discipline (Markussen, 2013; Manzini, 2015), however some consider that service and strategic design for social innovation are particularly relevant (Manzini, 2015). Designers are engaging different stakeholders in their activities and processes, where collaboration is key (see co-creation and participatory design, eg: Sanders & Stappers, 2008; Mattelmäki & Sleeswijk Visser, 2011). Approaches like design for social innovation and design activism explore collaborative processes in many ways - however, these processes of co-creation and participation are not exclusive to these areas (Markussen, 2013).

One of the challenges of achieving sustainability is the need for new models of living and behaving, and, as such, social innovation is seen (by politicians, business and design) as a good opportunity to develop such models (Hillgren et al, 2011). For Manzini (2015, p 62) design for social innovation is “everything that expert design can do to activate, sustain, and orient processes of social change toward sustainability”, meaning that design not only could participate by designing and proposing, but also by supporting social innovation.

Social innovation practices have different views on the role of the designer in such projects; Manzini (2015) promotes the idea of designers leading the conversation, while others, such as Mazé (2013), stress the necessity for designers to take political stances. This latter could relate to an understanding of who in society possesses access to and control over change (ibid). Therefore, giving designers “opportunities or abilities” enables them to play a role as “mediator”; someone who can make, for example, certain interests visible (ibid). The involvement of designers is not only questioned in terms of the ‘how’ (ie, the role the designer needs or should take), but also in relation to the ‘when’ and ‘where’ (ie, the form this commitment takes temporally and spatially). Some designers promote the idea of longer-term commitments to initiatives (Hillgren et al., 2011; E. Björgvinsson et al. 2012), requiring new models of design practice (Botero & Saad-Sulonen, 2013), as opposed to a single-project approach.

Increasing interest and funding for research about social innovation (Mazé, 2013) has lead to designers working on multidisciplinary projects and research, and gaining feedback from other fields. Mulgan (2014) has listed some strengths and weaknesses of design working in combination with social innovation, and some of his past criticism (2009) of

designers working in this field are brought up by Hillgren et al (2011): reservations about the length of the commitment, the tendency to “reinvent the wheel”, and a lack of critical questioning. Muglan (2014) also list the strengths: “understanding user experiences”, “ideation”, “rapid prototyping”, “visualisations”, and “systems”. Some of these points remain relevant (Mulgan, 2014), but others take into account the amount of money necessary to hire designers. On the other hand, Julier (2013b) states that many designers chose to work within design activism or social innovation as an alternative to poorly-paid industry-related positions, and to return to their ethics.

Design for social innovation is framed as a form of design activism (Meroni et al, 2013); an outlook connected to social movements (Thorpe, 2008) and alternative activities (Julier, 2013b). According to Julier (2013b), design activism “include[s] the development of new processes and artifacts, where their starting points are overtly social, environmental and/or political issues, but where they also intervene functionality in these” (pp 219). Such new processes or artifacts in the practice of design attempt to develop “alternative models” (ibid).

2.2.2 | Designers working with alternatives

Design researchers have been exploring the concept of design for social innovation in different ways. To illustrate some of their approaches, here I will introduce the work of DESIS Labs and the MEDEA living lab of Malmö.

DESI

“Design can contribute to creating the hard and soft infrastructure that establishes the conditions for a creative context: “hard” conditions like places, cultural concessions, facilities, technology and equipment; and “soft” conditions like network systems and people to people contacts.”

(Landry, 2000, cited by Meroni, 2007, p 11)

DESI - Design for Social Innovation and Sustainability - is an international “network of Design Labs based in design schools and in other design-oriented universities and operating with local, regional and global partners to promote and support social change towards sustainability” (DESI, 2015). The network began officially in 2009, though work by different universities dates back to the years 2006 to 2008 (DESI, 2015). A key factor in the origins of this initiative is the project EMUDE, which culminated with the book *Creative Communities*. This publication created a significant reference for designers investigating and understanding grassroots social innovation initiatives (Meroni, 2007).

The network was intended to enable shared experiences, and thereby create knowledge around projects and actions undertaken by various socially-innovative global labs.

One method of sharing knowledge is by clustering projects into themes. Two thematic clusters of particular relevance to this research are the public and collaborative cluster (exploring design that works with public policy) and the food cluster. Initiated at different points, both showcase information in different ways: the first in the form of a publication (containing the implications of design practice, design education, and policymaking), while the second began as an online resource (showcasing projects through ‘transversal issues’).

MEDEA lab in Malmö

“[W]e explore whether innovation in practice can be about opening up spaces for questions and possibilities (rather than seeing innovation purely as producing novelty products to be marketed).”

(Björgvinsson, Ehn , & Hillgren, 2012)

Started as an academic initiative at Malmö University, Medea Collaborative Initiative began during 2009, “exploring new media and collaborative processes” (Hillgren et al, 2011; Medea, 2016) to move towards a transdisciplinary research platform “address[ing] societal challenges through experiments and interventions” by focusing on “media, design and public engagement” (Medea, 2016). The lab engages with different actors from the city of Malmö: the municipality, the third sector (NGOs), business, and others such as artists (Medea, 2016), so as to promote collaboration to understand how to develop new services which tackle social challenges (Hillgren et al, 2011). For instance, with the aim of pursuing better democratic approaches, they explore ways in which processes could help marginalised social groups (Björgvinsson, Ehn , & Hillgren, 2012).

My interest in their work derives mainly from their critical approach and questioning of the limits of design for social innovation, bringing up dilemmas and suggesting that “even if these activities do not always evolve into a concrete product or service, we believe that acting out these ‘things’ reveals questions, controversies and opportunities that can have an impact for social change in the long run” (Hillgren et al, 2011). Hence, they are flexible in their approach to looking at the initiatives, and in their processes (ibid). Their work is based

on a process that promotes long-term collaboration, leaving open goals, timelines and even structure, which they call “Infrastructuring” (ibid). In addition, they stress the importance of understanding innovation “within a historically and geographically located phenomenon (rather than as a universal [or] a historical one)” (Björgvinsson, Ehn, & Hillgren, 2012).

Such ways of working contribute to the development of trust between the actors involved and envisioning possibilities to connect bottom-up and top-down approaches - though its flexibility can sometimes render planning a complex challenge (Hillgren et al, 2011).

2.2.3 | Visual narratives: supporting alternatives in cities

“One way in which design manifests its political conditions - and potentially its politics - is through representations. Making something visible makes it political.”
(Mazé, 2013, pp 89)

Stories are told so as to enable us to understand the world surrounding us. They are also an important tool with which to explore potential futures - hence, sharing actual experiences of sustainability spreads the idea of a viably sustainable future. Storytelling is “[t]he activity of telling or writing stories”, according to the Oxford Dictionary (2016), and Manzini (2015) suggest it is a “tool that enable[s] us to deal with difficult topics” (pp125) such as the complex social problems we currently face.

There are different ways to tell stories, one of which is by using visual elements to build a narrative. Visualizations play

an important role in design practice (Segelström, 2009), both as an asset for collaborative or participatory processes (Botero et al, 2008; Schoffelen et al, 2015), and a tool for “codifying knowledge” regarding systems (Morelli & Tollestrup, 2007).

Using visualizations as a way in which to understand change, or to share it with others, designers have utilised them as a powerful method of disseminating information and of engaging the public in participatory processes (Schoffelen et al, 2015), while others use it to map relationships in a changing temporary space (Petrescu, 2012).

Visualisations also possess strengths highlighted by Muglan (2014) in regard to designers working with public and social innovation. He notes that visualisations help at different stages and can have an important impact, and create “potential solutions”, as well as emphasising the impact clear visualisations can have in communicating ideas to others, for example, policymakers or civil servants (ibid).

The importance of storytelling for social innovation, in regard to designers, has been discussed in various talks arranged by the DESIS Philosophy Talk initiative (DESI Philosophy Talk, 2015), which asked how professional designers contribute to these areas. Manzini (2015) suggest that professional designers can develop storytelling “technically, by integrating it with professional skills, and culturally, by proposing socially and environmentally sensitive contents” (pp 125). Hence, designers should broaden the exploration of content, processes and tools towards storytelling.

Below, I will share three proposals by designers attempting to understand, share and visualize ‘alternatives’. These are works which influenced me in developing my own.

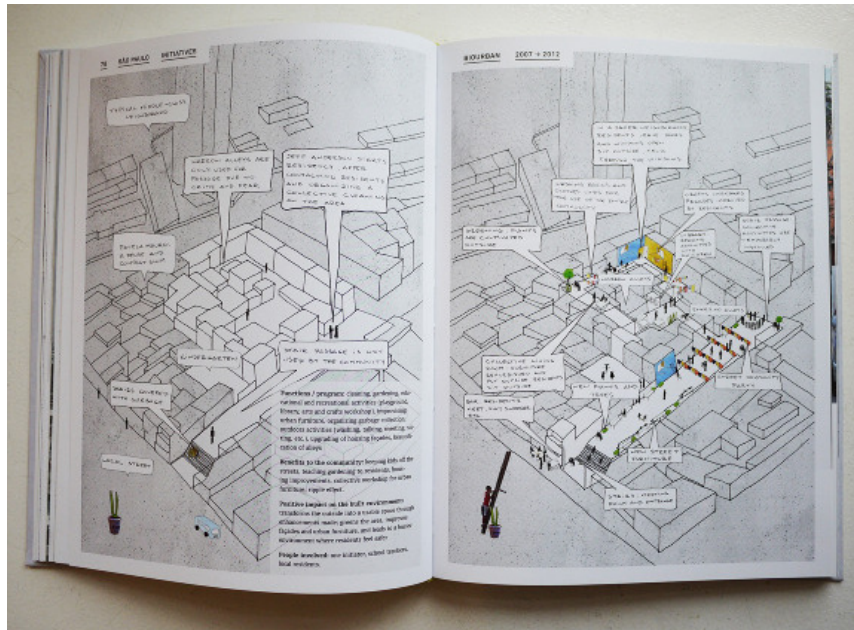


Figure 04: Handmade Urbanism (Rosa & Weiland, 2013); an interesting example of the initial contextualisation, through facts about and images of the city, followed by illustrations, pictures and text on the 'alternatives' (picture available at: <http://marcoslosa.com/Handmade-Urbanism>)

First, the book Handmade Urbanism, which illustrates urban change carried out by citizens or communities from five cities, explored through case studies (Rosa & Weiland, 2013). The book gathers information from cities that received the Deutsche Bank Urban Age Award, and focuses upon the word 'handmade', highlighting the importance of something done by hand - in this case, by the people themselves. To place special emphasis upon the idea of whose hands are behind the projects, the publication pays special attention to context, introducing each city through pictures, data and a timeline, giving a strong sense of the projects' specificity. Second, examples of the gathering and sharing of information about citizens' activities: online, 'Participatory City', and the aforementioned Creative Communities.

EXAMPLES OF HOW PARTICIPATION CULTURE PROJECTS WORK

TRADE SCHOOL

Trade School is an alternative, self-organised learning space that runs on barter. Anyone can teach anything they are passionate about or skilled at - experience, practical skills and big ideas are all valued equally. No money changes hands, instead teachers say what they'd like in exchange for giving their class, and pupils sign up by agreeing to bring a barter item from the list.

The barter mechanism means there is no financial barrier to attend a class and learn a new skill. The open offer to teach creates opportunities to share and practice underused skills. The informal atmosphere and exchange creates new social connections.



BZZ GARDEN

Bzz Garden is a project to encourage bee-friendly planting and shared food growing in public spaces. It aims to create a multitude of small gardens to support the local bee population and produce locally grown food.

People are invited to grow in underused patches, street planters, front gardens or window boxes. People can share tools, plants and knowledge to beautify the neighbourhood and create a publicly enjoyed focus for enthusiastic gardeners.



GREAT COOK

The Great Cook is a project where people come together to batch cook meals, and take home portions for the week. Anyone can offer to share a recipe they enjoy making at home, and just multiply the ingredients to create a large batch.

People join in by registering to bring one of the ingredients needed for that dish.



7

Figure 05: Example of 'The Illustrated Guide to Participatory City' (2015) developed by Participatory City ORG, illustrating examples of citizen-driven projects (available at <http://www.participatorycity.org/the-illustrated-guide/>).

'Participatory City' is a project including sections such as The Illustrated Guide to Participatory City (which shows how neighbourhood projects can be supported with the right platform and tools), and 'The Community Lover's Guide': a web page that gathers global examples of citizens' activities ('Participatory City' ORG, 2016; 'The Community Lover's Guide', 2016). Creative Communities (Meroni, 2007) gathers a significant amount of cases of grassroots social innovations around Europe, gathered by design students. Both 'Participatory City' and Creative Communities gather information to share with others about the importance of these initiatives: 'The Community Lover's Guide' does so through direct access to the initiatives, while Creative Communities uses cards that enable understanding of different initiatives on equivalent levels.

Third and finally, two different examples based around mapping: Doina Petrescu and the graphs for the mapping of

ECObox and RURBAN, and the Manual of Collective Mapping of Iconoclasistas.

ECObox was a project by Atelier d'Architecture Autogérée that attempted to rethink utilisation of “unused or underused” spaces with temporary proposals (Petrescu, 2012), for which mapping was an important asset. Mapping ‘agencements’ - the relationships between and development of people and their activities in relation to the project - using lines and color-coding to identify different interests or activities, created an “evolving portrait of a fluid and elusive socio-cultural and spatial entity made by informal and temporary relationships” (Petrescu, 2012, pp 137). This mapping enabled them to visualise different actors’ behaviour throughout the process, even to the extent of mapping themselves to better understand their own roles (ibid).

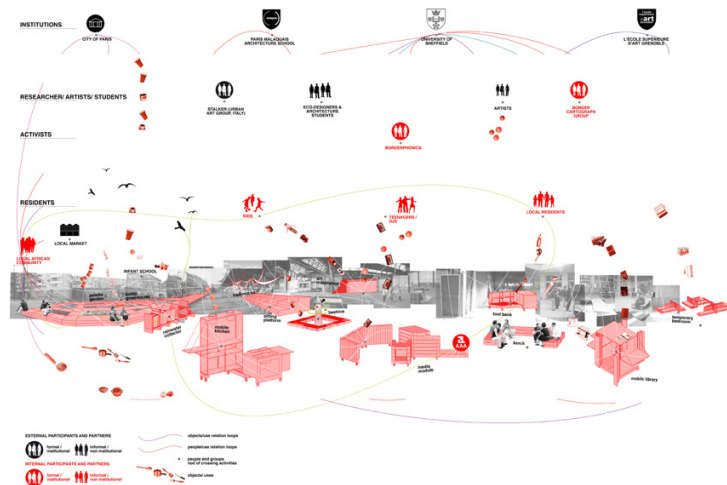


Figure 06: Image of mapping done for ECObox by Atelier d'Architecture Autogérée (Petrescu, 2012) (available at http://www.ryerson.ca/carrotcity/board_pages/community/ecobox.html)

Iconoclasistas, on the other hand, undertake collaborative mapping to understand what is happening within a community (Iconoclasistas, 2016). The use of icons and other graphics contribute to the discussion with the public, enabling them to express themselves through the use of metaphors (ibid). These graphic tools assist in subsequently collating the information, and helps linking them with people’s stories (ibid). The maps are a “narrative strategy plus a tactic decision”, which can create a “reconstruction of the network” and visualise how people “inhabit” spaces in both collective and individual ways (ibid). At the end of their English-language publication (2016), they claim that their work provides “evidence [of] the creative and political potential of graphic and artistic devices” (Iconoclasistas, 2016).

Both of these examples synthesize through graphics complex information about the relationships people have with space, or that the space creates or enables.

2.3 | Summary and conclusions

My literary references attempted to lay out some of the ‘alternative’ narratives that citizens are proposing in order to shape more sustainable lifestyles, through experiential activity.

I have focused upon grassroots social innovation initiatives, and the importance of these in terms of research (Seyfang & Smith, 2007; Mazé, 2013; Mulgan, 2014; Manzini, 2015), and of proposals for sustainable lifestyles (Mont, Neuvonen and Lähteenoja, 2013).

Grassroots social innovation initiatives modify behaviours and beliefs, and help to redefine notions of wellbeing regarding desired quality of life or lifestyles. These initiatives recreate individual and collective identities, as well as strengthening the interactions between people and institutions, helping the public to engage with urban matters.

My intention was also to demonstrate ways in which these alternatives interact with institutions (governments, local authorities, etc) (Mayer, 2013), and how these interactions could support the development of such initiatives, particularly where “creative city policies” (ibid) render cities more likely to adopt or promote them. The literature illustrates that for an improved understanding of these alternatives’ development, and ways in which they could be supported, knowledge about their context is key.

As an integral part of citizens’ daily lives, food plays an important role in sustainability strategies. From ‘the field’ (production) to ‘the table’ (consumption) (Ericksen, 2007), citizens and institutions alike are working towards more sus-

tainable behaviours; though some of these changes coincide, reach and aims generally vary between the bottom-up and the top-down. Hence, understanding these interactions is crucial in order to explore methods through which grassroots social innovation can be supported and spread.

Some approaches, such as design for social innovation or design activism, enable designers to support and spread the innovative practices originated by the public to disrupt the current situation (Meroni, 2007; Markussen, 2013; Mazé, 2013; Manzini, 2015). The way citizens get together and why they do so has changed, creating a new scenario for the analysis of social action. Designers are exploring the role visualizations can play in spreading and understanding the knowledge and changes the initiatives generate in their immediate contexts.

The literature highlights the importance of the context of such initiatives; that is, primarily small-scale local actions undertaken by citizens to reshape their environment. To further explore this concept, and to provide understanding of the context of the case study, the next chapter will introduce Helsinki as a city for alternatives.

Chapter 3 | Helsinki as a place for alternatives

“The alternative city is [...] a network of cultural communities defined by time and space, and politically self-managed towards the maximization of use value for their residents; this use value is always decided and re-examined by the residents themselves.”

(Castells, 1983, pp 320-321)

The present chapter provides an overview of Helsinki as a place for alternative actions towards more sustainable food production and consumption.

Helsinki is experiencing major urban developments that are changing the way the city defines the urban and how people live. Among the traditional urban planning approaches, the city is attempting to foster more participatory actions.

Some of these initiatives have been prompted by major events contributing to alterations in urban culture. As examples, I will highlight two important events: Helsinki as capital of culture and as World Design Capital. The timeline (illustrated in the subsequent section) begins in the year 2000 with Helsinki as capital of culture, where the city planned and supported activities around culture and assessed their effects upon the regional economy (Mustonen, 2014). During 2012 Helsinki, with Espoo, Vantaa, and Kauniainen, became a World Design Capital (WDC), a benchmark for the city in terms of design and the public realm, while also boosting and establishing various social innovations. One of the initiative's themes was 'open city', and with it the citizen was placed in an important role. Many projects that triggered, encouraged, and promoted citizen engagement were founded during this year.

The exploration of previously introduced concepts - the grassroots, social innovation and food culture - will now be framed and contextualized through the example of Helsinki. How do these alternatives work in Helsinki? What is happening in Helsinki around sustainable food production and consumption through top-down and bottom-up approaches?

To understand ‘alternatives’ in Helsinki, I will initially briefly introduce the concept of urban activism. Urban activism in Helsinki has developed quickly during the past decades (Mustonen, 2014). Helsinki is the biggest city in Finland, its urban centre, and the capital of the country since 1812. Still, the city is young in comparison to other European capitals, and even to other cities in Finland – so it might be said that the urban culture of Helsinki is young as well (Mustonen, 2014).

Mustonen (2014) broadly defines urban culture as “the various ways of living in a city”, relating “content” directly to the urban environment (pp 27). In Helsinki, urban culture and urban activism create each other, expanding (Mustonen, 2014) and contributing to more sustainable lifestyles. Grassroots social innovation initiatives are also attempting to increase the sustainability of current daily lives.

Finnish grassroots initiatives could be identified as more organized and structured than others elsewhere (Kohtala in Meroni, 2007). This may in part be due to Finland’s long tradition of gathering its people to pursue common aims or ideologies through the establishment of NGOs. Hence, Finland is called “[t]he promised land of non-governmental organizations” by Alapuro and Siisiäinen (in Taipale, 2007), not only in reference to the amount of NGOs in Finland but also because of the relative ease of forming one there. Becoming an NGO allows the initiative to have clear governance, better structure, transparency with money, and the possibility to apply for funding (Risto Alapuro & Martii Siisiäinen, in Taipale, 2007). These organizations contribute to shape democracy and influence politics in the country (ibid). However, Alapuro and Siisiäinen (in Taipale, 2007) point out that NGOs have currently adopted a more “apolitical” approach than in the past, when pressure was applied to politics from the

‘bottom’. Instead, today’s organizations contribute to culture and generate “new kinds of politics”, even down to questioning the tradition of registering in associations, by providing alternatives for which registration is not necessary (ibid).

Collective actions and engagement through ‘doing’ are viewed positively by institutions and government. Additionally, Helsinki is seen as an important capital due to its growing citizen involvement and engagement (Hernberg, 2012; Viljanen, Poikola & Koponen, 2012; Helsinki Quarterly, 2014), which some connect with the idea of “*talkoot* culture” (Synder & Zappia, 2016).

“*Talkoot*” is the Finnish word for collaborative voluntary work, involving labour, social interaction and even fun (Hjerpe in Taipale, 2007; Paterson, 2010). Traditionally, it was organized in rural areas as a way of gathering people to work together on something beneficial to the community or individuals, pursuing collaboration and communality. Now, the term has evolved to encompass urban culture and even the technological realm (ibid). Examples of ways in which citizens are acting collectively range from growing numbers of neighborhood festivals, like the ‘Kallio Block Party’, to events like ‘Cleaning Day’, when the entire city transforms into a flea market (Keskinen, 2014).

Collaborative work and urban activism in Helsinki have strong connections to food. Currently, the food scene is growing as a result of food strategies and activism enthusiasm. Sustainability is one part of such strategies.

3.1 | Food culture in Helsinki: aiming towards a more sustainable food culture

Food in Helsinki has been experiencing new developments in variety and quality of taste, promotion and legislation. Finland has not always been known for its food culture and cuisine; criticised by Berlusconi when Helsinki and Parma were rival candidates for the EU's European Food Safety Authority, a so-called "prosciutto war" was instigated between the countries (Castellanos & Bergstresser, 2006). The Food Safety Agency was ultimately awarded to Parma, while Finland was given the ECHA, a regulatory authority implementing EU chemical legislation (ibid).

The Finnish government began to promote Finnish food culture with the SRE program (Suomalaisen ruokakulttuurin edistämishjelma), started during 2008 to develop food policy, with sustainability as part of its targets. Finland as a country, and particularly Helsinki, as its capital and main city, developed strategies, and promoted and developed food on different levels (Helsinki Foodism, 2009; Steering Group, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2010). 'Food for Tomorrow', the proposal for Finland's National Food Strategy stated that "food consumption is shifting from just satisfying hunger to a growing focus on a comprehensive sense of well-being" (Steering Group, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry, 2010). Emphasizing, to some extent, the social aspect of food through a focus on well-being, social interaction derived from food, and even personal "fulfilment" (ibid). More particularly, Helsinki has its own specific strategy regarding food, initiated in 2009. The Helsinki Culinary

Culture Strategy developed approaches on different levels concerning how the city would deal with certain food issues. One of the aims of the strategy is to position Helsinki as a tourist destination, boosting its 'Culinary Culture' through various action plans in different parts of the food chain (Helsinki Foodism, 2009). The city worked together with different actors of the Helsinki food system: educational institutions, food-related businesses, Palmia (catering provider for public institutions) and Tukkutori (Tori Quarters, the historical centre of Helsinki; a wholesale market for groceries). In the Helsinki Cultural Culinary Strategy, sustainability could be found among the goals regarding reducing CO² emissions related to the food chain, stressing the importance of organic food production, and focusing on organic meals for schools and "mass meals" (Helsinki Foodism, 2009). This strategy was intended to last until 2015, but now, in 2016, a new phase of the strategy has begun, through which its goals will be revised (2016-2021).

The city wants to develop food as a tourism strategy, taking different approaches to provide a more attractive food-tourism destination. Examples range from renovating the market halls to graphics promoting food culture. The focus was initially on the markets halls, especially developing the Teurastamo area with the Abattoir (an old slaughterhouse), but, also, to boost the area, and to strengthen the idea of street food with, for instance, Street Helsinki. This street food festival is also an initiative of the strategy, like the Hel Yeah! food map which was developed with the aim of starting to building the city's brand in relation to food (Heinrichs, 2014). Other actions - eg., on an academic level, the creation of the position of professor of Food Culture at the University of Helsinki - demonstrate the growing interest in food culture in Helsinki. In 2011 Johanna Mäkela was appointed to the

chair of this new professorship for Finland, and even on a global level (Amilien, 2012). The funds for the position also show the growing interest in fostering food culture on different levels, encompassing as they did money from both the university and the public sector, as well as companies and even members of the public (ibid). The chair emphasizes academic efforts by introducing a multidisciplinary course package for university students to work on 'food culture', as well as political interest resulting from the new 'Food Policy' (ibid).

Another important aspect of Helsinki's food scene, employing citizens directly, is urban gardening. Local and organic food production is valued by Finns (Albov, 2015), and, as such, is promoted - for instance, by the Culinary Cultural Strategy of the city (Helsinki Foodism, 2009). Urban gardening in Helsinki has a long history, including allotments and colony gardens (City of Helsinki, 2015; Luokkala, 2014); the oldest allotment garden in the city dates from 1918 (Jardin Familiaux, 2016; Siirtolapuutarhaliitto, 2016). Allotment gardening has been gaining popularity and waiting lists for land are long (Helsinki Times, 2012a). However, urban gardening in Helsinki has undergone changes and improvements, with a recent boom having been well explored (Häkkinen et al, 2012; Hernberg, 2012; Luokkala, 2014; Albov, 2015). Urban gardening manifests itself in many ways, from rooftops to members of the City Hall planting gardening boxes on a balcony to promote the practice (Helsinki Times, 2012b; Helsinki Foodism, 2016). Additionally, other approaches pursuing more sustainable food production are growing in popularity, for instance the organic food circles - 'REKO food rings' (Albov, 2015) - operating in the Helsinki region (Helsinki city, 2015).

Not only is food production taking more sustainable directions, but a more sustainable culinary food scene is also developing, from new vegan options to discarded-food restaurants (eg. the restaurant Loop resulted from the project 'From Waste to Taste', and a co-operative vegan kiosk - Jänö - opened during the summer of 2016).

3.2 | Grassroots social innovation, design and food culture in Helsinki

Examples of food activism vary between different ranges of citizens and organizations taking action to change urban culture and urban food culture in Helsinki. Activism actions goes from internationally recognized citizen-driven examples like Restaurant Day, to more punctual actions developed for instance by Aalto design students (see for instance Moebus, 2011, and Baroncelli Torretta, 2014).

Restaurant Day, a "food carnival" enabling people to set up their own restaurant for one day, exemplifies how public actions can question city policies and regulations and prompt their modification (Viljanen et al, 2012). The event started as a "happy rebellion" against the authorities and strict regulations regarding food (Kukkapuro in Herberg, 2012; Martikainen, 2014; Restaurant Day, 2016), but turned into a 'celebration' of food, changing how people interact with food provision and the city itself.

The city is undergoing extensive urban development, and is in a state of transition as large urban development projects take place, while an urban plan has just been approved (Uutta Helsinki,

2016). Additionally, collaborative action, or talkoot (Paterson, 2010), is being utilised in innovative ways thanks to social media and new methods of communication (Hernberg, 2012).

Food culture is influenced by this urban development, particularly, as Mustonen (2014) suggests, by the phenomenon of “temporary spaces”. Hence, the city began to change its strategies and include temporary uses in its urban planning; for example, the first manifestation of this trend could be seen in 2010 with the ‘Kalasatama Temporary’ project, which intended to develop a ‘temporary’ public space in the former port area, integrating the public and giving space to grassroots initiatives (see Hernberg, 2012 pp 90-101).

A previous example of the use of subsequently developed land is the Happihuone (Kohtala in Meroni, 2007; Kohtala & Paterson in Berglund and Kohtala, 2015). This “Oxygen Room” was a venue for a wide variety of cultural events, re-configuring the idea of a greenhouse built for the European Cultural Capital in 2000, when the area of Töölönlahti was, like Kalasatama, in the process of urban development (Kohtala & Paterson in Berglund and Kohtala, 2015).

Such urban activism development also prompted the need to record and share these stories. Books like *Helsinki Beyond Dreams* (Hernberg, 2012) or *Changing Helsinki?* (Berglund and Kohtala, 2015) provide examples of these developments in this city. These books not only share citizens’ urban activism, but also illustrate and contextualize these projects - hence my use of them as references in my work.

“[A] better grasp of the overall ethical and political dimensions of the changes now taking place could and should be nurtured in Helsinki. We wanted to do this by telling some stories that weave together several threads, leaving room for hope as well as scary prospects. [...] “The future, after all, is not predetermined but full of possibilities: that is, there are always alternatives.”

(Berglund and Kohtala, 2015 pp 31-32)

Chapter 4 | Methods

A case study approach was chosen to conduct this exploratory research. The information such an approach creates is “context-dependent”; based on concrete experience and proximity to those under observation (Flyvbjerg, 2006). The case study approach allows researchers to utilize specific instances to understand particular issues through the prism of a concrete example; a “unit” of research (Crouch & Pearce, 2012). Therefore, I selected Dodo’s urban farmers group as they are already seen as a representative example of urban gardening - and sustainable food production - in Helsinki (Hernberg, 2012; Berglund, 2013, 2016). Additionally, previous personal experience with the initiative convinced me of the importance of sharing their story.

To answer the research question and build the case study, I collected data and materials through qualitative research methods (Table 01), including participant observation in Dodo’s activities (Crouch & Pearce, 2012; Guest et al, 2013), and semi-structured interviews with members and volunteers within Dodo (Qu & Dumay, 2011; Crouch & Pearce, 2012). I complemented this material with a literature review on alternative methods of grassroots social innovation, food issues (its complexity, and alternatives towards more sustainable production and consumption), and the role of visualizations for such alternatives. Additionally, I used secondary sources like Dodo’s online photography collection. This helped me frame the initiative within the context of Finland generally, and Helsinki specifically. I also participated in forums and other events throughout the process, and interviewed experts in the areas with which the thesis deals.

Research question
What kind of ‘alternative’ narratives do grassroots social innovations initiatives develop towards more sustainable lifestyles, and what kind of ‘visual’ narrative could be produced to present and analyse them?
Method
Case study approach. Case study selected: Dodo’s urban farmers group. Qualitative research methods: participant observation, semi-structured interviews.
Data and materials collection
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literature review on ‘alternative’ methods of grassroots social innovation initiatives and the role of visualizations for such alternatives Two stages of semi-structured audio recorded interviews: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> First stage, to understand food culture in Helsinki and the alternatives present in the city: four interviews with experts (between June and August 2015) Second stage focusing on the participants’ experiences with and perception of the initiative: ten interviews with members of Dodo’s urban farmer group (November-December 2015) Engagement with the initiative mainly from six months during 2015 (starting in June) Visual collection: visualization used in the process of understanding and connecting the materials through graphs, timelines, etc. One activity with group members during Dodo’s ORG Days 2016, utilizing summarized activity cards Secondary sources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social media, blogs, initiative’s website Dodo’s online photography collection Participation on forums and with other events in areas relevant to the thesis deals

TABLE 01: Methods and material collection regarding the research question.

In order to undertake participant observation, I engaged with Dodo’s urban farmers group for approximately six months in 2015 (starting June 2015) to better understand how they function, to identify suitable interviewees, and above all to get a feel for their activities and their proposals. During those months I participated as a volunteer in their activities, for example helping in the kitchen for brunches, volunteering at food stalls during events like the flea market for Pixelache festival or Dodo’s 20th anniversary party, as well as volunteering for some of the shared group work sessions or talkoots. I also participated in more organizational meetings, such as a board meeting and ORG days. These experiences from 2015 formed the foundation for the case study, while, as my participation in the organization continues, some information derived from 2016 activities, including my proposal of an activity with them during ORG days to gain feedback about part of my interpretation of the material: the activities classified in activity cards (see appendix for further information).

In regard to the interviews, these were semi-structured, and conducted at two stages of the research. I selected semi-structured interviews, for both stages, due to their flexibility (Qu & Dumay, 2011), which allowed me to change the structure, order and even style of questions as appropriate. Nonetheless, all interviews followed a similar plan in terms of general topics that I wanted to be covered, for which I formulated some questions to guide the conversation (ibid). The first stage was a set of four interviews with different experts who could provide a context for food in Helsinki (between June and August 2015), while the second stage involved ten interviews with Dodo members/volunteers, to discuss the story of the urban farmers group (November-December 2015). Such interviews are crucial material which I use to re-construct their narrative, and even as an inspiration, taking some direct extracts from them to help me build up the story.

For the selection of the interviewees the approach varied across the two stages. The intention of the interviews with experts – first stage – was to understand food culture in Helsinki and the alternatives present within the city. I contacted a professor and three experts regarding grassroots social innovation initiatives: the chair member of Restaurant Day and Dodo, as well as a key initiator of the urban farming group. My aim for the second stage of the interviews with the urban farmers group was to collect as many different views as possible, so as to collate a thorough picture of how the organization is seen and experienced from within. I therefore contacted a diverse group for interview, considering a varied range of people with different ties to the organization and participation in its activities. Through the participant observation period I identified approximately 20 members of Dodo who were connected to or worked with food (mainly around Kääntöpöytä), and some others from previous research (approximately five). I then contacted 17 of them and was able to conduct ten semi-structured interviews. In the interviews I concentrated on their experience and perception of the initiative, so as to gain understanding of the experience. Given my participation and engagement in the initiative, I had previously met and shared experiences within the Dodo environment with most of the members interviewed. This was likely beneficial to the flow and atmosphere of the interviews. However, I also decided to contact unknown faces so as to explore different insights and challenge my role as researcher.

To complement my own material, I relied upon literature review and secondary sources such as Dodo's online photography archive. This warrants mentioning in more detail, as it was a valuable source of visual information, helping me to both connect and understand activities and events mentioned in the interviews, as well as to understand the story of the initiative more fully. It also gave a visual perspective on the

actors involved, helping me to construct the narrative, with their pictures sometimes playing a key role.

To process the materials, I used visualisations as a tool to understand and connect the materials, through for instance graphs and timelines. Visualizations are considered important assets in design practice (see e.g. Morelli & Tollestrup, 2006; Segelström, 2009) and also a suitable tool for collaborative activities (Botero Cabrera, Naukkarinen, & Saad-Sulonen, 2008). They are also commonly considered a design technique critical to the understanding of context, through the mapping of systems and their composite parts: actors and interactions (Morelli & Tollestrup, 2006). Segelström & Holmlid (2009) locate narratives as a research and interpretational tool for design (Segelström & Holmlid, in Segelström, 2009). Segelström (2009) also interprets narratives as one of the “basic visualization technique[s]” for design: “basic techniques can be used to achieve more than one of the goals, for which visualizations are created” (ibid).

At every stage of the process I visualized materials and data collected, to understand the initiative and connect information about them and the context. Regarding the interviews, I had failed intentions to introduce visualizations in some way. In the second stage of the interviews I tried to include the timelines as a tool for adding the missing information, but I abandoned the idea because, on the first attempt as the interviewee was uninterested in it. Regarding the questions, I also added one about what kind of visual references the interviewees could give me, connected to Dodo's urban farmers group story, but as it was not understood by many of them I did not use it in every interview. Hence, the visualizations and overall understanding of the story is my personal interpretation. I should also note that from the beginning of my research, my intention was to learn from the group through

engagement and observation of their activities; I therefore did not consider planning participation processes myself to interact with them as key for my study.

Continuing with the idea of producing a visual narrative, to present these findings I took inspiration from an approach that reconstructs and analyses narratives of social change regarding social innovation (TRANSIT, 2015), utilizing the elements to build a story. This approach focuses on elements such as narrative content, including: context (and the purpose of the actors in developing such activities), the actors involved (who participated), and the plot (how these activities occurred). I adopted this approach and utilized it, through visualizations, to then start constructing the visual narrative.

Table 02 and 03 presents the main categories I defined and used to deconstruct the interviews, observations and images, so as to consequently piece together the narrative. The method I used to present and analyse the narrative also explores its content and role. For content I utilised the categories: actors, plot, and motive, whereas in regards to role, I located the actual role or influence of the initiative, and searched for possible roles or interactions.

For the content of the narrative I developed two visual narratives. The first - How did things grow? - is the story of the initiative based on the materials and supported by timelines, pictures with notes, tables and graphs. The second - What made things grow? - focuses on the activities of the initiative, categorizing and analyzing them through descriptive cards about their activities (which I call activity cards), and which I briefly categorized by their motives. Visual resources like colour-coding helps the reader to more easily identify information about the actors. Timelines and pictures help to illustrate temporal and spatial context.

Content of the narrative			
Building the content of the narrative			Visual narrative
Motive Why?	Why are alternative narratives - like Dodo's urban farmers group - necessary? What was happening in Helsinki? What other events influenced them?	-Aims -Context -Interactions (influences, references)	How did things grow? Focus on the story. Storytelling through timelines, pictures and graphs
Actors Who?	Who is part of Dodo's urban farmers group? Who interacts with them?	Internal and external actors	
Plot How? (When?) (Where?)	How do Dodo's urban farmers group do what they do? How have they developed over time?	-Context -Interactions	What made things grow? Focus on their activities. Categorizing information by activity cards.

Table 02: Method used to present the materials collected from the research: the way in which I will produce the narrative of Dodo's urban farmers group in Helsinki.

The analysis - role of the narrative - explores more intuitively the influence that the initiative has within its context; the actual role - How is the harvest? - is my interpretation of the role of the initiative in regard to Helsinki food culture. The possible role - What could be cooked with it? - is where I identify some of the tools, understand their possible uses and tentatively suggest possible roles they could have in the future, speculating about the possibility of supporting them, either directly or indirectly.

Role of the narrative			
Role of the narrative		Visual narrative	
Influence	Actual role How are 'alternative' outlooks, such as those of Dodo's urban farmers group, influencing Helsinki's food culture?	-Interact and influence top-down and bottom-up approaches	How is the harvest? Interpretation of their current role: Visualizations, table, graphs, timelines.
	Possible role How can grassroots social innovation initiatives be supported? Which possibilities exist for Dodo's urban farmers group?	-Visual narratives tools -Suggestions of reconfigurations	What could be cooked with it? Identification of some of the tools, understand their possible uses and suggestion of possible future roles: Table, graph, timeline.

Table 03: Method used to analyse the materials collected and the story produced.

Throughout this document, visualizations play a crucial role in building the overall narrative of my work. As such, I consider the entire document itself as a larger visual narrative, holding within it the two main narratives developed by interpreting the urban farmers group's story, and their quest towards more sustainable food production and consumption.

To obtain some feedback about my work from the initiative, I utilized the activity cards for an activity with some Dodo members during Dodo's ORG days. As the activity cards I had developed were detailed and lengthy, I produced a shorter version for the activity instead (although I took the original activity cards in case someone was interested in looking at them). Even though it was challenging because of the time that I was given and language limitations, I obtained valuable feedback and was able to show part of my work to the group. These encounter helped me to understand how hard categorization can be, the motives and views held about their own activities, as well as giving me valuable input for developing my ideas around suggestions.

Chapter 5 | An alternative narrative around food in Helsinki: Dodo's urban farmers group

This chapter explores an alternative food narrative proposed by the urban farmers group in Helsinki, developed by Finnish urban environmental organization Dodo ry. I will provide a brief overview of the organization, then focus upon the urban farmers, the group specifically working with food sustainability.

Although Dodo's urban farmers do not self-identify social innovation in regard to their practice, their focus is nevertheless on current social issues, which they attempt to make more sustainable through innovative proposals. Grassroots social innovation initiatives, as previously defined, are organic, citizen-led initiatives acting to solve problems or change situations. Given the information collected from reports and interviews, I consider the organisation to fit this definition.

I will utilise two complementary approaches in telling the group's story (content), and two different ways of analysing it (role). The first two are 'visual narratives': How did things grow? tells the story of the urban farmers group itself, while What made things grow? provides a more specialised insight into their activities. How is the harvest? interprets the group's current role, and What could be cooked with it? identifies some of their tools, considering possible uses and suggesting possible future roles, through reconfiguring existing ideas and materials.

5.1 | Background of the urban farmers group

Before presenting the group's story, I will give some information about the larger context of Dodo's urban farmers group within the organization. This includes background information on Dodo, how they communicate with people, and what else they pursue besides sustainable food. In this way Dodo's general ideas and the place of the urban farmers group within the organization will become clear.

5.1.1 | Dodo ry

"Dodo was absolutely the first organization to do that kind of really important move of 'Hey, we need to look to our own lifestyles'." (108)

Dodo ry is a Finnish non-governmental urban environmental organization that works for the "urban folk", pursuing the idea that "environmental problems are solved in cities" (Kaupunkiviljely, Dodo ry). Their story started about twenty years ago in Helsinki, where their incentive was the need to approach environmental issues from an urban and social perspective. Now they have become a very well known environmental organization in Finland, and currently have around 250 members, with groups operating all over the country.

During its existence, Dodo has been both prompting discussion and putting into practise ways that Finnish lifestyles can change towards sustainability. Their approach mainly involves taking action; 'doing' and experimenting. This culture of experimentation is implemented in different forms

and levels within the various groups operated by the organization, exploring a range of topics and ways to approach environmental issues: from a reading circle to understand and discuss a given subject, to concrete projects in, for example, developing countries such as Mali or Madagascar. Three main themes were recently introduced as umbrella topics: sustainable urban design and housing, sustainable food production, and sustainable global development (Dodo ry). Other organizational changes have also been made to promote better synergies, like the introduction of a new webpage to support and strengthen these topics, as well as moving the Dodo office from Katajanokka) to Pasila, next to the Turntable cafe.

Dodo communicates in various ways and organizes gatherings to enable discussion of its issues, from annual face to face organizational events, such as ORG days in which members gather to discuss general directions and projects, to virtual communications through social media. Social media and blogs also form an important archive of pictures and information about their story.

Web pages, blogging, social media, and mailing lists allow communication with internal or external actors (eg, public or private Facebook groups), and the dissemination of news, events and even ideas. These channels are mainly Finnish language, though some short descriptive sections in English can be found.

This research focuses on Dodo's activities relating to sustainable food production, exploring as case study the urban farmers group's relationship to their close context: Helsinki. It should also be noted that although this study focuses purely on Helsinki, other groups have developed projects and events around sustainable food production and urban farming in other Finnish cities like Turku, Tampere, and Oulu.

5.1.2 | Dodo and sustainable food production: Dodo's urban farmers group

Dodo's urban farmers group, which originated in 2009, forms the part of the organisation that works towards increased sustainability around, primarily, food production. The group is characterized by a strong experimental approach, developing knowledge and experiences which can be passed onto the public as tools which they can use, alter and think about themselves. Their approaches toward sustainable food have varied over time, ranging from the organisation of big events, for example Megapolis, to supporting others such as Restaurant Day. The timeline (figure 7) makes it clear that the gardening group is a relatively young element of the organization, yet for many years it has acted as a point of reference for public perception of Dodo.

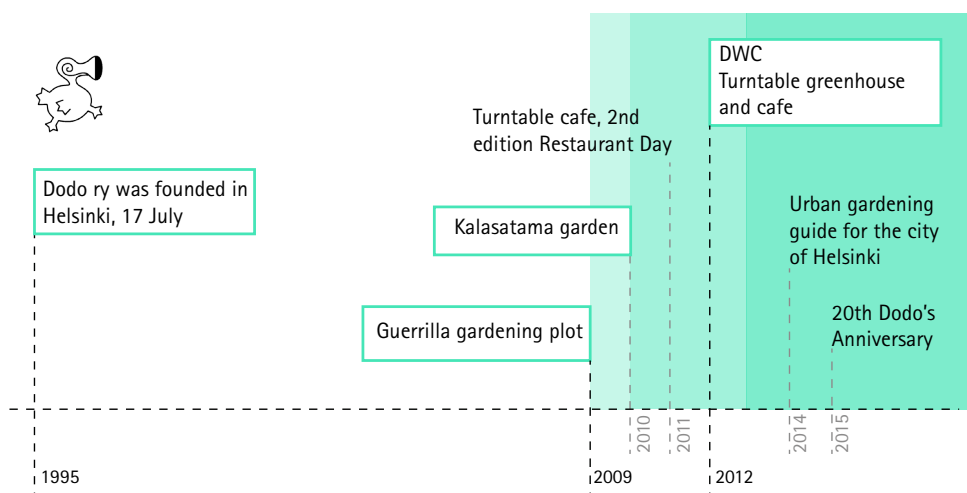


Figure 7: The green section shows the duration of the urban farmers group in relation to Dodo's general timeline

The farmers group's activities mainly take place in Pasila, where the Turntable cafe and greenhouse are located. They engage internal and external actors in various ways, mainly through concrete actions such as working in the garden during talkoots. Because of the diversity of the group's activities during the year, the amount of volunteers and their type of involvement alters, from punctual manual work during some talkoots, to more dedicated engagement organizing activities and communicating with others. The constitution of the group is flexible and variable, though many of the initial members remain key figures in the development not just of the urban gardening group but also for Dodo in general.



Figures 8 and 9: Kalasatama garden and Kääntöpöytä (Dodo archive on Flickr, photographer: Kirmo Kivelä)

Not only an important group working towards sustainable food in Helsinki, the urban farmers are also one of the main references for recent developments in urban gardening in the city (Herberg, 2012). For instance, their guerrilla gardening interventions have spread knowledge about the practice, and helped and inspired others to start their own gardens around the city. This experiential approach helps the group to make concrete contributions in food sustainability, while at the same time building awareness about the issue.

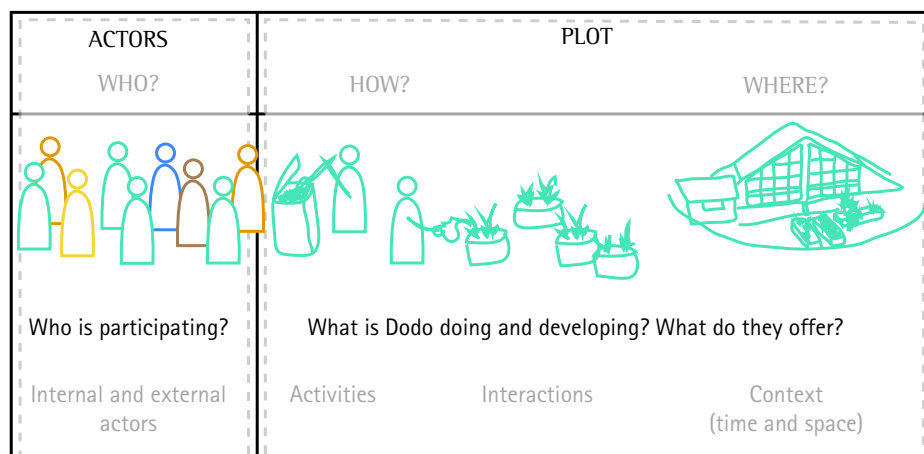
5.1.3 | What do I need to know before reading the story?

Based on my interactions with Dodo's urban farmers group I will here identify key parts of their story (figure 10), as well as introducing the key elements covered during the subsequent pages.



Dodo and sustainable food production: the urban farmers group

MOTIVE	Finnish non-governmental environmental organization: promoting more sustainable ways of living by experimenting in public space and discussing food production and safety
WHY?	



PICTURES WITH NOTES AND TIMELINES

COLOR CODING

	Dodo and the urban farmers group		Institutions (state, government, municipalities, authorities, or some strategy or policy developments)
	Other activists or fellow citizens. Other people also 'doing'		Media
	Companies, donors, partners, researchers, etc.		

Figure 10: Different elements to be identified in Dodo's urban farming group narrative.

5.2 | How did things grow?

Having collected relevant materials and information, I am able to present the urban farmers group's story. Focusing on story-telling, visualizing and identifying the actors, materials, and interactions, will allow me to understand the context of the time at which their ideas and activities were being developed.

The group's development can be divided into three main stages (illustrated in figure 11), and equated to different stages in the growth of a plant:

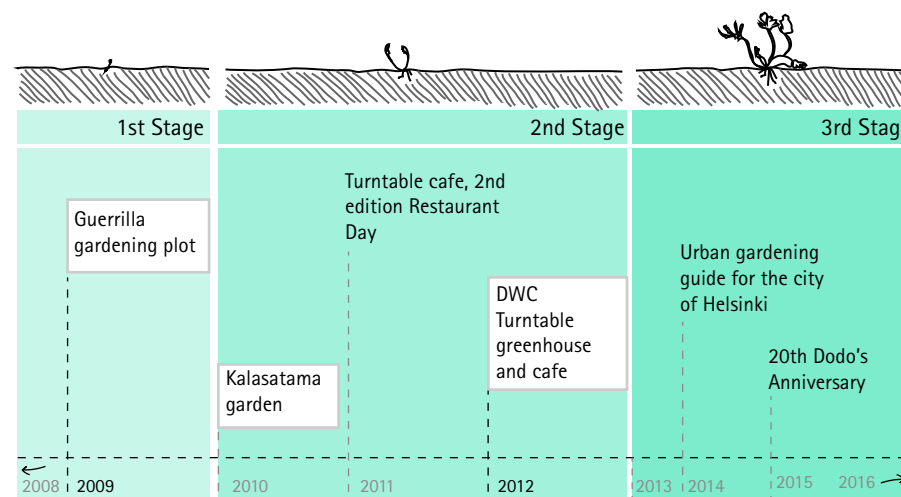
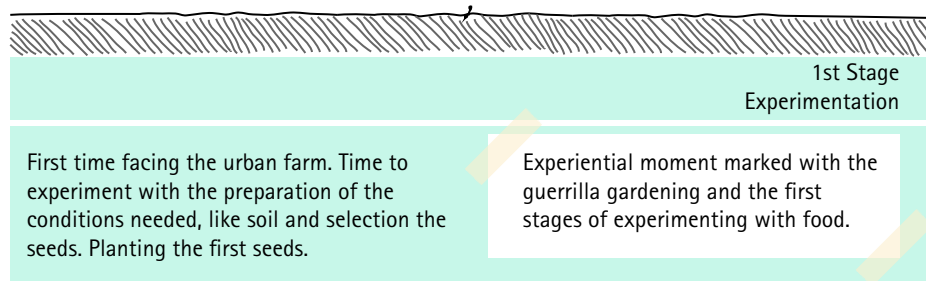


Figure 11: Dodo's urban farmers group story represented as a timeline showing three stages: experimentation, materialization and realization, with key moments.

'How did things grow' for the urban farmers group across these stages? Each stage has the same fundamental 'story' structure - an initial narrative based around the initiative, and a second part based around the factual context.

5.2.1 | Experimenting with urban farming



When the urban farmers group began, the organization used to put on a large annual event called **Megapolis**. Every year there was a different theme, to frame discussion about urban environmental issues. In 2009 the theme selected was “**Food and Cities**”; a choice which reflected global concerns about food. Dodo was one of various groups attempting to do something which would trigger a discussion about food issues in cities. With Megapolis, Dodo wanted to show that urban farming is not as complicated as many people think, and that anyone can grow their own vegetables. To do so, without any experience, they started their own project to grow food in a **guerilla gardening plot** by the unused Pasila rail yards. Their initial message related to experimentation and discussion of the future of food production and food security: how people can change the idea of the urban, and how food can be cultivated in cities, even in places where it is not allowed.

After the occupation of the space, a large garden box was constructed collectively, utilizing discarded materials, donated soil and transplanted plants.

The space chosen for the garden was significant, since, being close to the railways, it could easily attract the attention of



Figure 12: Materials used for the guerrilla garden by the Pasila railway, 2010 (Dodo archive on Flickr, photographer: Kirmo Kivelä, intervened by me).

people traveling by train. To ensure this, a graffiti wall was constructed behind the plot to increase its visibility.

Working together to understand urban farming also extended to gatherings for harvesting and sharing food together (figure 13). To show that vegetables grown here were edible, the plot's harvest was tested in Dodo's 'MetropolisLab' during the Megapolis event. The vegetables' clean results could then be shared with others, along with a communal dinner. What started as the subject of an annual event ultimately developed into one of the main themes of the organization: food.

Urban farming was not a new practice in Finland. However, this new form of 'urban gardening' promoted by Dodo sparked the attention of the media, who started to engage with it in different ways, further promoting the concept.



Figure 13: Sharing food at the guerrilla gardening plot in 2009 (Dodo archive on Flickr, photographer: Sasa Tkalcin, intervened by me)



Figure 14 : Communal dinner in the garden covered by the media (Dodo archive on Flickr, photographer: unknown, intervened by me).

| About the context

In 2007–2008, a world food crisis struck which led to heightened concerns and protests from people around food (eg. **carrotmob**). People reacted by attempting to change the situation, for instance through guerrilla gardening. As a tactic, guerrilla gardening can have many different forms (from a temporary plot like Dodo's to planting seeds or flowers in arbitrary spaces as a message), and its practice spread across many European countries through events like the **guerrilla gardening day** started in Brussels.

'**Happihuone**' by O2 Finland (the second phase of a greenhouse which began with the **European capital of culture**) was a place for art and activism, with discussions about food being one of the many taking place as the greenhouse developed as a space. This venue demonstrates how space can allow discussion and propagate the development of alternative activities.

Strategic decisions taken by Finland and the city of Helsinki regarding food should also be noted. Some examples are the **SRE program** (Suomalaisen ruokakulttuurin edistämisojelma) to promote Finnish food culture on a governmental level through food policy development; the targets of which included sustainable food issues, focusing primarily upon young people and children. Subsequently, the **City of Helsinki cultural strategy** pursued similar targets, and the city started to strategically develop Helsinki's food culture.

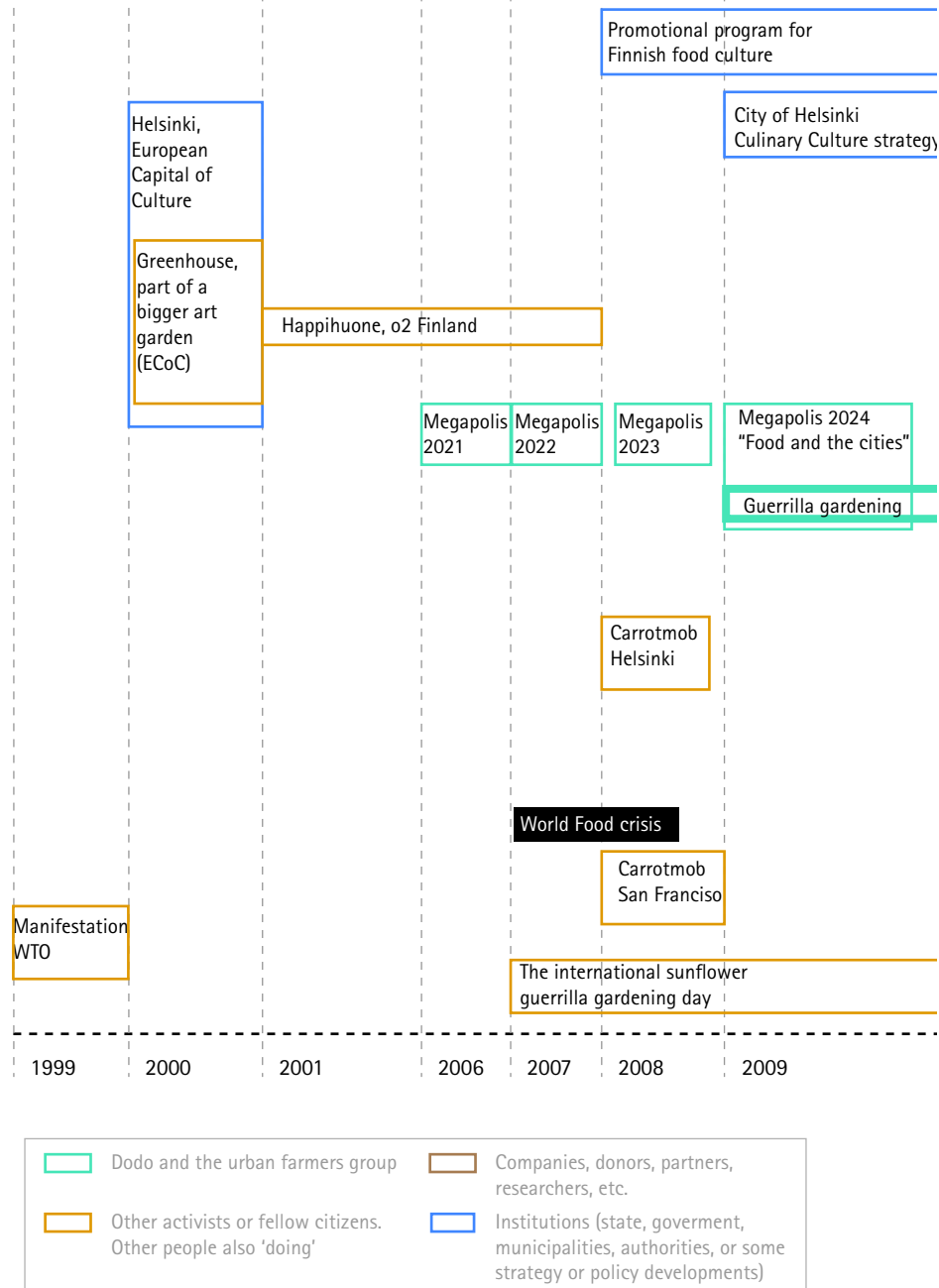
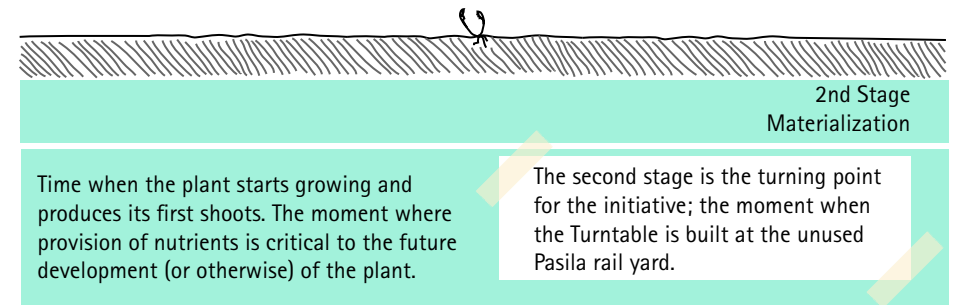


Figure 15: The years prior to guerrilla gardening in Pasila. The timeline situates the events introduced in the story.

5.2.2 | Growing and materializing



It was clear by this point that Dodo had something to say regarding food production, beyond guerrilla gardening. Experimentation continued over the following years, in a more intensive and tangible way. Simultaneously, members of the media and public continued to make contact, wanting to spread or utilise their ideas.

During this period urban gardening underwent an expansion in Helsinki, with almost every urban garden being in some way related to Dodo. At the same time, the urban farmers group achieved two milestones: the Kalasatama garden and the Turntable (Käätöpöytä) greenhouse and cafe.

Kalasatama temporary was an initiative commissioned by the city of Helsinki to use the construction area of Kalasatama as temporary public space; an attempt by the city to engage citizens by enabling them to appropriate space legally (albeit with an informal spirit). The **Kalasatama garden** is an example of the activities carried out in the Kalasatama harbour.

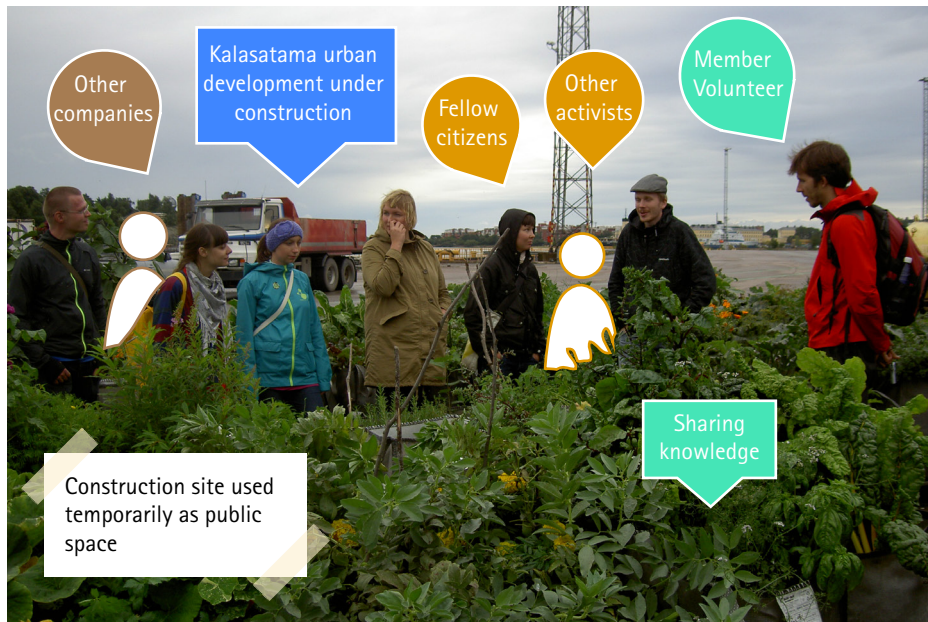


Figure 16: The Kalasatama urban garden began during Kalasatama temporary, facilitating interactions between different actors (Dodo archive on Flickr, photographer: Maria Nordlund, intervened by me)

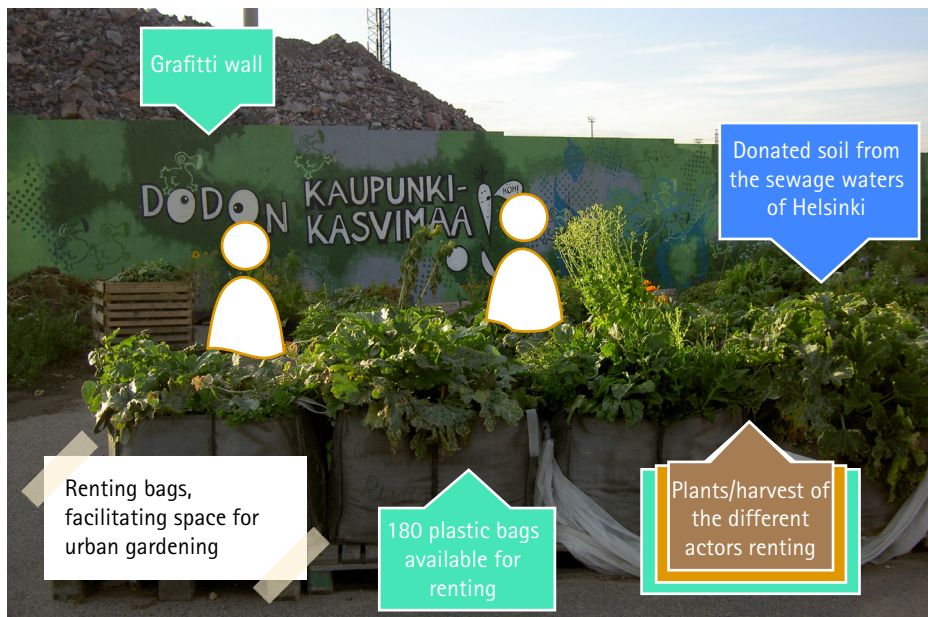


Figure 17: Garden scheme started with bags (Dodo archive on Flickr, photographer: Maria Nordlund, intervened by me)

The garden developed according to a familiar scheme: plantable spaces (in this case soil-filled bags) which could be rented. The necessary materials were provided by Dodo, donated or provided by institutions and the people involved themselves (figure 17). However, some were donated only for a certain period (such as water provided by the city water administration), after which time payment was required.

With the Kalasatama garden the urban farmers group again provided an example of urban gardening in Helsinki, bringing with it busy times for the group: helping people develop their own gardens, or collaborating with others in order to start further gardening projects. During this period the group began to be recognized as an important part of the city's urban gardening development. As such, in 2011 the group was presented with the Kesko Sustainable Development prize,

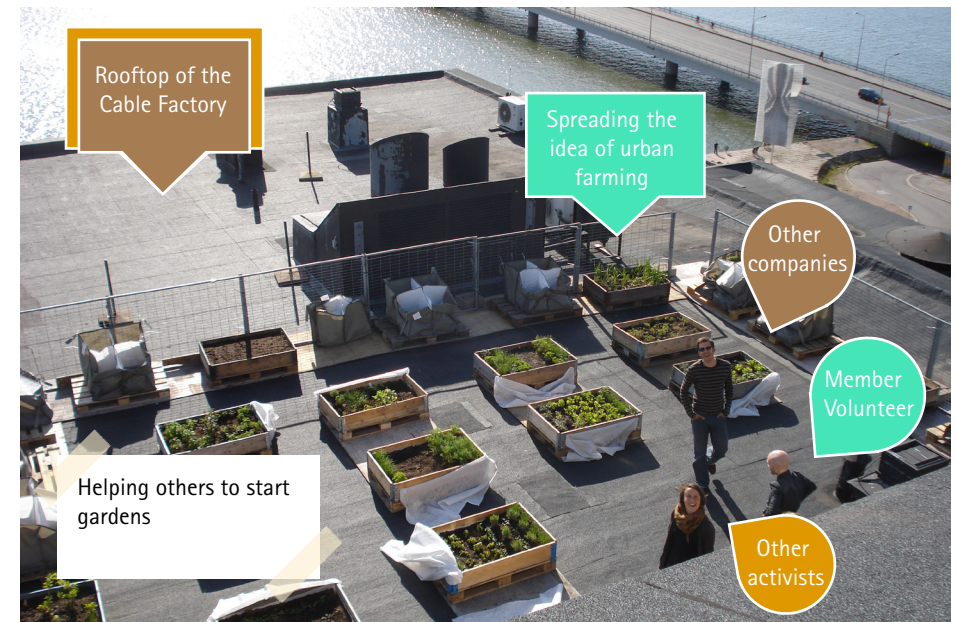


Figure 18: Dodo's urban farmers group helped start many urban gardens all around Helsinki (Dodo archive on Flickr, photographer: Pinja Sipari, intervened by me)

allowing them to pay one of their members as a coordinator, helping to better respond to the requests they received. Developing a garden bigger than the guerrilla plot, with which to experiment, was considered by the urban farmers group for some time, but urban development did not allow this to take place in the same location. This limitation led to what started as a box garden close to the railway becoming something more ambitious in terms of space and place: the construction of a greenhouse on the unused turntable, to be used as an experimentation centre and cafe.

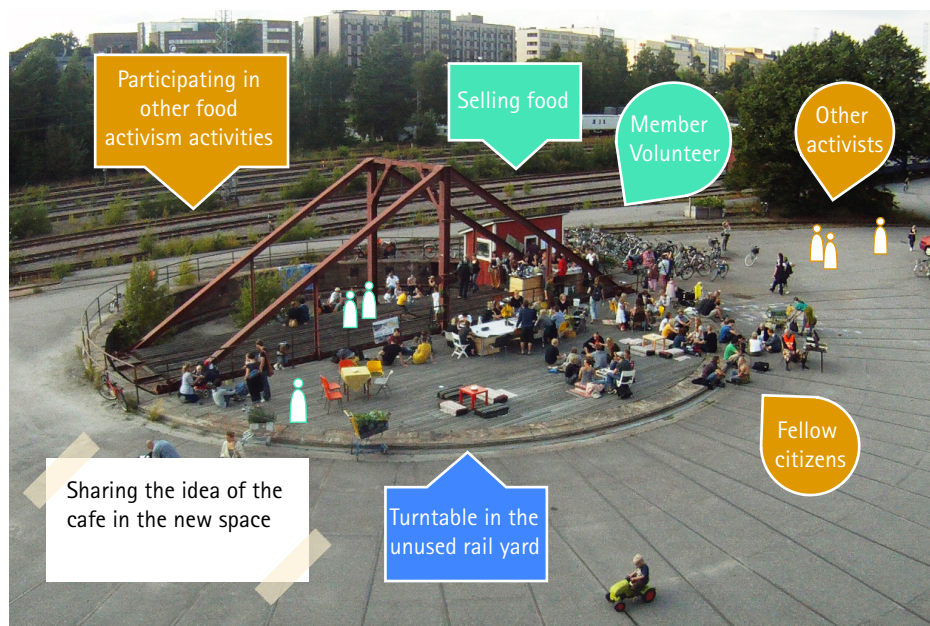


Figure 19: The first appearance of the Turntable cafe, as a pop-up restaurant during Restaurant Day: sharing the idea of starting a cafe in this location with the public, and supporting other initiatives' alternative approaches to having a restaurant (Dodo archive on Flickr, photographer: unknown, intervened by me).

Even before starting construction, the group wanted to share their idea of the cafe with others, and celebrated it during the second **Restaurant Day** in August 2011. The atmosphere of the space has continued to change since then.

Many challenges had to be faced in order to accomplish the idea of a greenhouse, while issues ranging from money to architectural considerations towards the old construction site required analysis and discussion.

The group continued to develop the idea and applied for finance from the **Helsinki World Design Capital** fundings scheme, as it was aligned with their intentions. This application was not the only source of financial support; other donors (Snap Systems, Fiskars, Biolan) interested in being part of the World Design Capital activities, and in Dodo's proposal, provided cost-effective resources and gardening supplies.

However, the first challenge was negotiating the space, which involved locating those in charge of the turntable to gain permission to use it. Formalising the group's status brought many other challenges and considerations, such as the need to pay rent for the new space.

To ensure that the construction would be sympathetic to the location and its existing structure, museum expertise was sought.

After settling the details, an intensive construction period began (figure 20), during the snow and cold of March. The greenhouse was a collective process from the beginning: plans were drawn up by an architect who was part of the

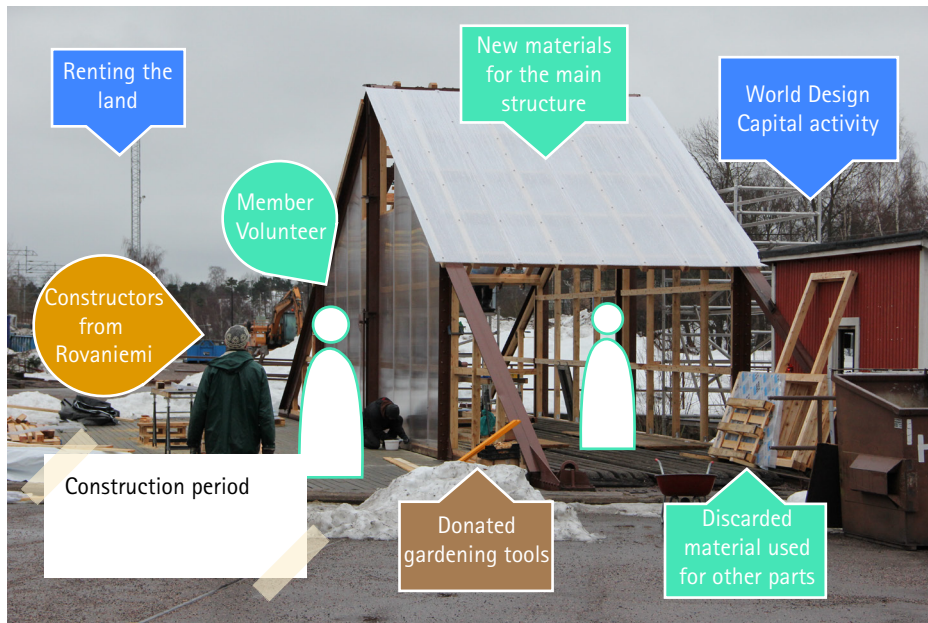


Figure 20: Construction of the greenhouse, March 2012 (Dodo archive on Flickr, photographer: Kirmo Kivelä, intervened by me)

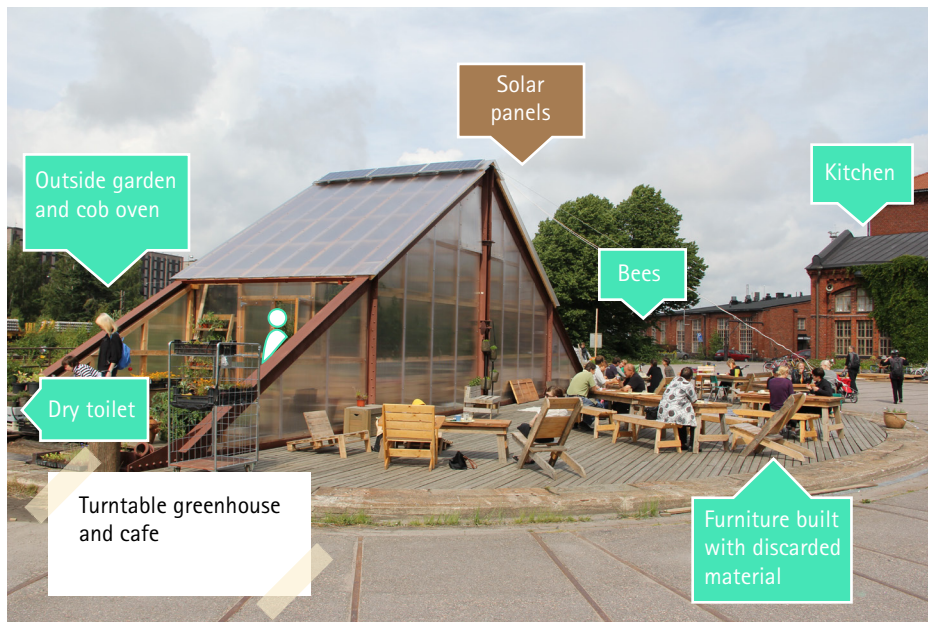


Figure 21: The completed greenhouse (Dodo archive on Flickr, photographer: Kirmo Kivelä, intervened by me)

group initially promoting the concept, while specialized constructors from Rovaniemi came to make the structural part of the greenhouse, with the help of many volunteers/members.

Collective and voluntary work, in the form of *talkoot*, contributed to almost every single step of the greenhouse. Even elements like the furniture, the dry toilet and the cob oven were realised communally.

The group's intention was not just to build the greenhouse and construct a large garden next to it, but to also start working on the idea of the cafe. For the gardening activity itself they had sufficient knowledge, but it was necessary to obtain the advice of a farming specialists in order to understand what combinations of plants are needed, in relation to pollination or soil nutrition. The incorporation of bees also followed, to closer approach a closed loop. The group wanted to achieve a system that was self sufficient and would get all it required from itself: composting discarded food and plants to nourish the soil; using the harvest as produce for the cafe; receiving economical income to sustain the activities; utilizing alternative energy systems (solar panels, windmill, even a bike during some events), and so on. All along, the group recovered, reused, and recycled everything it could to get the idea going.

A kitchen was required for the cafe, so the transformation of the space extended to the office building next to the turntable; the kitchen and office here were renovated. This was carried out collectively, and even the tableware was received through donations. Additionally, a dry toilet also conformed to the closed loop system.

| About the context

In the same year that the Kalasatama harbour was transformed by citizens' actions like the **Kalasatama garden**, a proposal for Finland's national food strategy, **"Food for Tomorrow"**, was submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry. This governmental report on food policy promoted the idea of sustainably produced food, and was followed by the inclusion of **food in the government programme**.

The **Helsinki Cultural Culinary Strategy** gained more visibility, as preparations for the **Helsinki World Design Capital** promoted food. Although the strategy contemplated the idea of an "edible urban environment", the city was more visibly concerned with locating Helsinki as a food destination by fostering and renewing the old market halls. Food gained a new place in Helsinki, with efforts from various directions, such as the creation of a new chair for a **food culture professor**.

During this period, notable counter action was taken by both citizens and the city. For instance, **Restaurant Day** began as a rebellion against the bureaucracy of food. However, the action was not only accepted and grew into an event popular with the Finnish public, but institutions made some of the legislation more flexible to accommodate it, and even awarded the event in acknowledgement of its importance as part of city culture.

In 2012, Helsinki celebrated the World Design Capital year with an 'open city', an idea intended to be developed through many activities engaging citizens and initiating urban processes. Throughout the year, Dodo continued to boost urban gardening in Helsinki with many different actions, from their own projects, like **Turntable**, to numerous other collaborations, such as the wooden **Plant Tram in Suvilahti**, the rooftop of the cable factory, gardening boxes in the Design Museum, and a garden in Teurastamo.

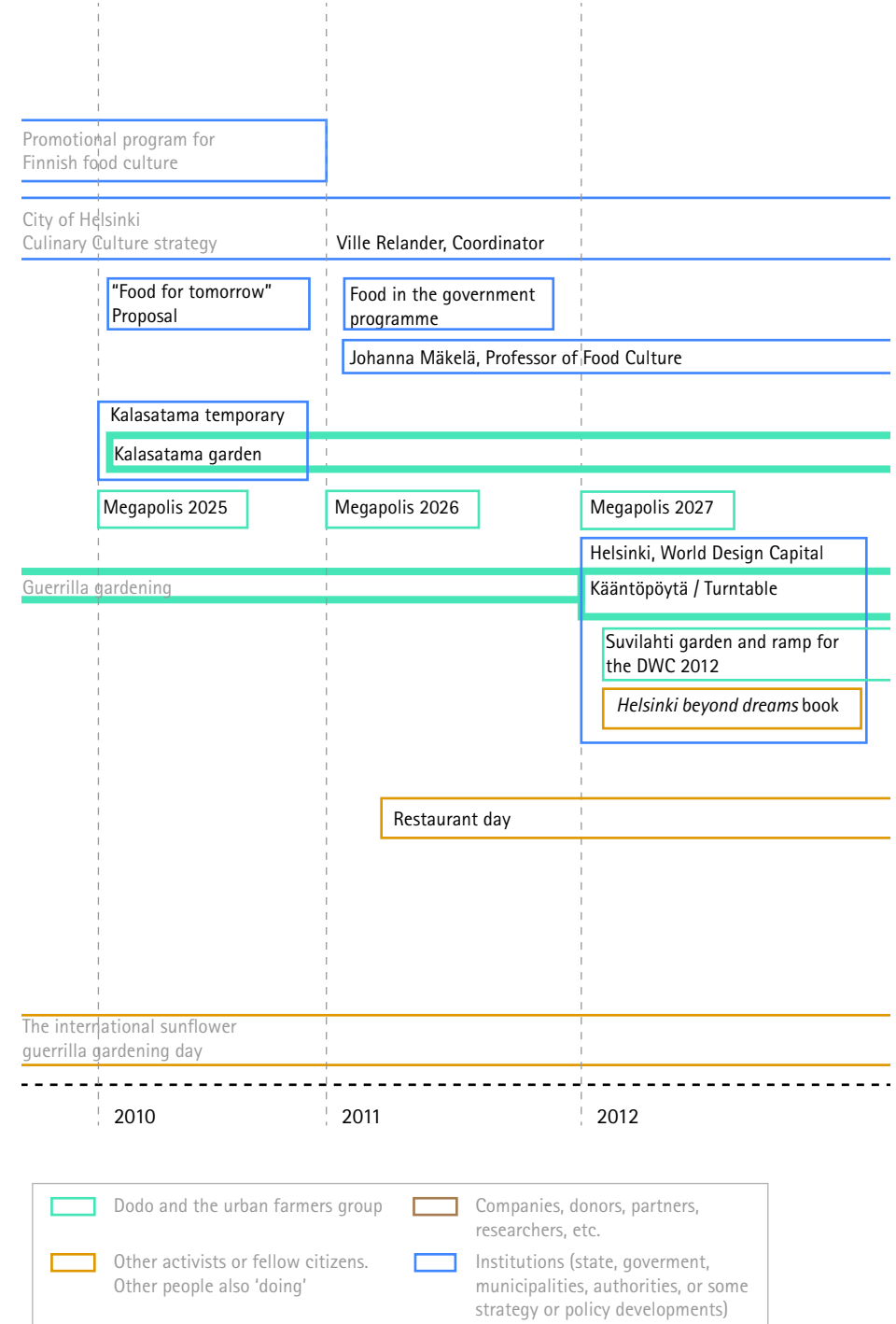


Figure 22: The second stage, marked by two important events for Dodo working with food, and how they relate to strategies around food, authorities, and citizens' actions.

5.2.3 | Facing production, harvesting, and looking forward



3rd Stage Production

Time of the harvest. The vegetables have developed completely, but need to be collected at the correct moment. Challenges and questions about production and continuation: how to use the harvest? And what kind of sowing will follow?

In its current state, the initiative enjoys its recognition and accomplishments. This carries many challenges and, though the group has developed its knowledge and expertise, there are still questions of how to improve.

This third moment represents the evolution of the urban farmers group after building their own garden, greenhouse, and environment for experimentation. At the beginning of this story, the group started experimenting with soil and guerrilla gardening. They promoted urban gardens, helped people to start their own, increasing the amount of collaborative urban gardens in Helsinki. The idea of an “edible urban culture” was blossoming. Now it is the moment to harvest what they have done, and decide how to continue. Through the construction of Turntable they decided to change their approach - to stay in one place with their own experimentation centre and cafe, allowing the development of new activities. Their discourse about food started to take on new angles: developmental research to accomplish their idea of a closed loop, gathering people from other organizations with similar concerns to discuss the topic, and even developing activities involving other aspects of food, such as eating.

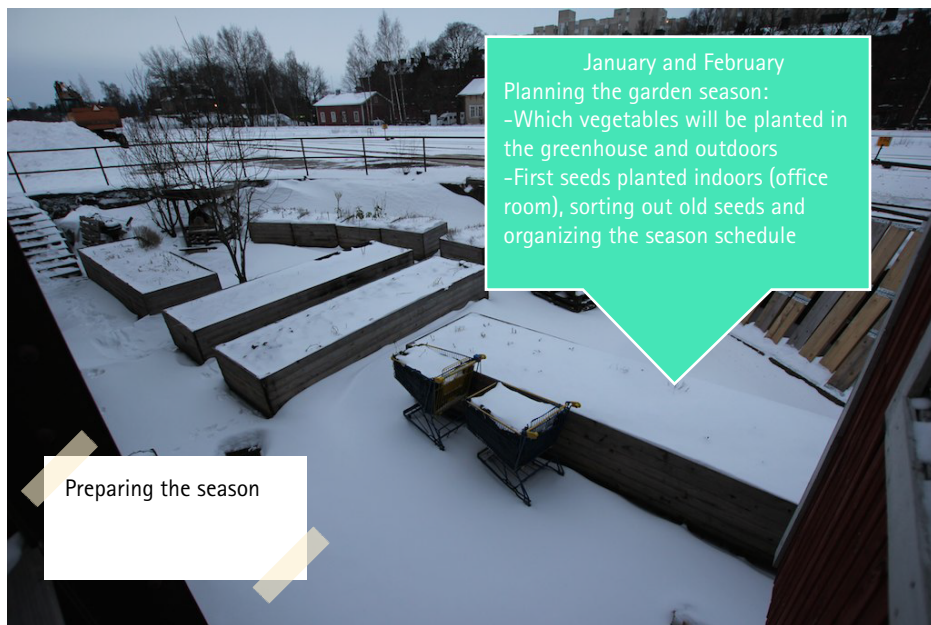
The urban farmers group has different ways to approach its continued development, as well as other ways in which to continue supporting urban gardening in Helsinki. They sell

industrial collars (wooden collars used for the planting boxes) to enable people to have their own boxes, with easier access. In addition, since many members of the initial group are now considered experts in this field, they have gained recognition in various ways: from discussing their research with academics, to developing a guide about urban gardening for the City of Helsinki in order that anyone can start a garden by themselves.

Their own urban gardens continue to change. The location of the **Kalasatama garden** was changed in 2015, due to continued construction development. In moving the garden, not only location was an issue, but poor UV protection and deterioration of the bags originally used for planting necessitated replacement with wooden boxes. Similarly, new soil was required, to replenish lost nutrients.

Turntable continued development towards becoming a closed loop. With a concrete garden and infrastructure to take care of, considering the maintenance and growth of the garden during different seasons is essential. *Talkoots* started to primarily concern the maintenance of the garden, and other necessary activities began, such as dedicated gardening shifts. The greenhouse and outside garden boxes require different care (including consideration of weather conditions, for the latter), enabling them to be grown and experimented with in different ways.

Over the years, the garden has changed completely (figures 23, 24, 25, 26), both in how it looks and what it requires. Planning for individual seasons takes into consideration past experience; therefore, some crops remain from year to year, even in the same spot, while other space can be devoted to experimenting with new plants.



Figures 23, 24, 25, 26: Pictures showing how temporal conditions (climate) affect the garden, and the maintenance carried out during different times of the year. (Dodo archive on Flickr, photographer: Kirmo Kivelä, intervened by me)



The greenhouse has a watering system for the plants. However, as research and experimentation has taken place, the greenhouse has been used to investigate different ways of fertilizing the plants. Since 2014 two methods are being explored: one side with urine and the other with compost and other nutrients.



Figures 27: The greenhouse enables experimentation with different crops and fertilizers. (Dodo archive on Flickr, photographer: Kirmo Kivelä, intervened by me)

During the season (from May to August) the garden not only provides space for plants and flowers, but also for the Turntable cafe. The cafe created a new discourse around cooking and eating, while the gardens became concerned with consumption as well as production.

This activity was perfected by doing: trying different formats until reaching one that was viable. Initially, the cafe was

opened on Saturdays - but people didn't come. Then, lunches were lunches throughout the first two seasons, but, although this was popular, it was not economically viable. Another format was to have the cafe open during events, like the 'fork print' talks during 2014, but this didn't prove viable either. Then, the idea of brunches and private events was hit upon - and this remains the current format, which the cafe is known for. Brunch is a meal between breakfast and lunch, for which the group offers a vegetarian/vegan menu. Happening mainly on Sundays during the season (a schedule is set at the outset), there are two different services that people can book by email or phone.



Figure 28: Brunch, open to the public and run by volunteer work. Currently the food is mainly prepared with discarded food from Hakaniemi market combined with harvest from the greenhouse (Dodo archive on Flickr, photographer: Eetu Ahanen, intervened by me)

The cafe is not just about how to use the harvest through cooking, and to foster the closed loop concept, but a way to gain economical resources.

The chef who started working with the brunch services during 2014 suggested a collaboration with the Hakaniemi market in order to get supplies of leftover produce the market is no longer able to sell. Having had prior experience of working with this kind of supply, the brunch menu effectively combined these supplies with the harvest from the greenhouse and garden boxes.

The brunch service is mainly carried out by volunteers, so the amount of people involved changes from day to day. Where possible, some of these volunteers greeted customers with the story of the greenhouse and the food's origins.

In addition, in order to receive some money, and to share the space while otherwise unused, the group began to rent out the greenhouse. Other methods of supporting their activities include applying for funding for different projects, while some companies still support their activities with either money or supplies.

| About the context

During this period, food in Helsinki has gained an elevated place and status. The idea of food culture does not only consist of strategic paperwork and legislation (food policy); it has been nurtured by events and the ideas of citizens.

[Helsinki Cultural Strategy](#) continued to develop, and during 2014 many important occurrences marked a new face for the strategy, three of which I will highlight:

First, the [Helsinki city food map](#) was released. Though planned since the beginning of the strategy, it was only produced later on, possibly because the marketing strategy 'Hel yeah!', around urban culture, began in Helsinki in the same year, 2014 (with three main themes of design, food, and nature). The marketing strategy and the map both provide food with an important place in Helsinki. Second, Street Helsinki began, an event promoting street food as part of the city strategy, contributed to the flourishing street food culture, and the variety and flexibilization of food. Third, during 2014 the organisation welcomed [one of the initiators of Restaurant Day as project manager](#).

The city of Helsinki also promoted other food developments besides the Strategy, such as the release of the Dodo's urban farmers guide to urban gardening, available on the city webpage. Currently, the Helsinki Culinary Culture Strategy have begun a new period, reviewing practices and once again changing project manager.

Events like '[Dinner under the Helsinki sky](#)' continued to develop the idea of communal eating that Restaurant Day started. However, [Restaurant Day](#) itself developed and changed, from an event run four times a year to a daily celebration of street food. Other events proposed by activists, such as 'Social Kitchen' or projects like 'From Waste to Taste', show how fundamentally Helsinki's food culture 'scenery' has changed. And so, the story continues for Dodo's urban farming group, still developing and re-thinking the activities they carry out.

And so, the story continues for Dodo's urban farming group, still developing and re-thinking the activities they carry out.

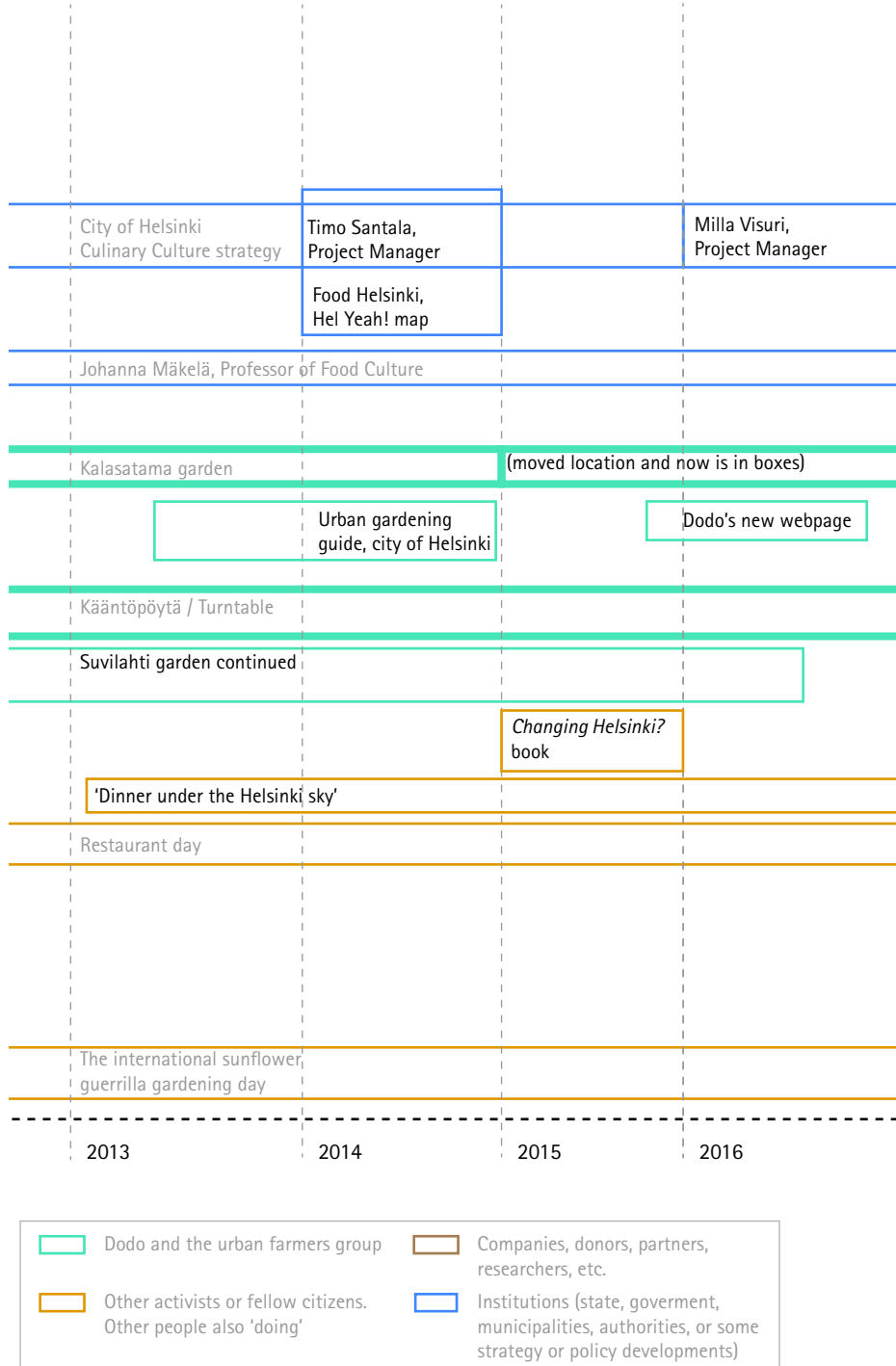


Figure 29: The third stage, marked by the guide about urban gardening for the City of Helsinki, and new organizational changes.

5.3 | What made things grow?

In this section you will understand in more detail the activities that Dodo's urban farmers group have managed to realise.

The activities that the group have proposed defines them, are key to the organization's development, and mark their narrative as an alternative to the mainstream.

Such activities vary in scope and objectives, as well as how interactions occur within them: from an open party to specific research projects carried out by particular members of the group. Time is very important: when and for how long these projects may happen.

The activities bring people together, and are situated within a particular context: creating a space that belongs to a specific time.

5.3.1 | What kind of activities do they do?

The spectrum of activities is varied: from organizing workshops for the urban gardening school to participating in working parties (*talkoots*). I identified 13 different activities which are listed in the inventory (see appendix pp 156), organized according to internality or externality, and in relation to the type of activity (eg. practical or otherwise). They are clustered in relation to their intended motives (figure 30): the main shared benefits that such activities bring to their actors, or why these actors decided to engage in such activity.

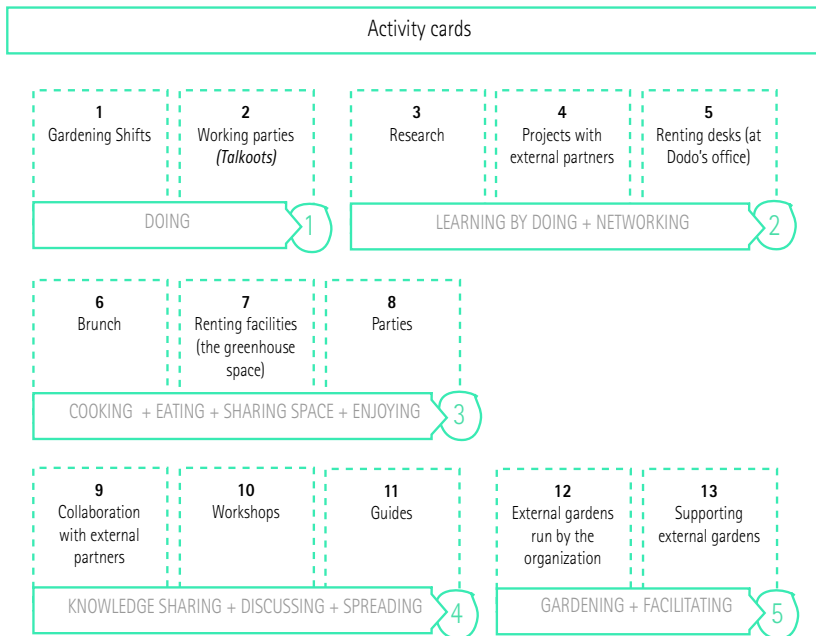


Figure 30: Activity cards' full inventory, clustered according to motives.

The activities from the first group are related to practical projects, involving hands-on learning. People enjoy doing something concrete and seeing the results (weeding, watering plants, mixing compost, etc).

The second group is strongly linked to building knowledge through doing, and exchange with others who share similar interests - for instance, experiences of an internship for the university done at Turntable, or the use of the initiative as research material, as I am doing with this study.

The third group represents the social aspect of food, with even cooking being carried out collaboratively. Additionally, these activities are the ones which attract the most external actors. The fourth group are activities that disseminate knowledge, and/or engage others around current food issues.

The fifth and final group relates to practical aspects of the urban farmers group, and their attempt to spread the idea that growing food is something anyone can try.

Many of these activities are internal, done by the organization - from developing research projects to maintaining the garden. However, as the group wants to encourage others in similar work, they organise many activities to either enable collaboration with others, or to attract external actors. The amount and flow of people varies (including old and new faces), as the variety of activities creates different ties with the actors involved. The type of activity also influences the ability to draw in participants; for instance, hands-on activities - such as *talkoots* - attract people because they are more understandable and accessible, have direct results, and demonstrate how to do practical things.

5.3.2 | What is an activity card?

Social innovation is about reconfiguring activities - but how? First it is important to identify the different elements of the activities in question. To better understand these activities, I designed an 'activity card': a card to synthesize and categorize key parts of the activity, and then illustrate it with a concrete example.

The card shows specific information about how the activity is done, who participates, and what motives the participants may have, while also giving a specific example by way of illustration, complementing the narrative of the story section. The full inventory (see appendix) presents all the activities identified around the urban farmers group: a collection of what makes the group work as it does.

Each card is divided into three sections (figure 31): first, identifying the activity, then what ingredients are required to carry it out, and finally, an example to illustrate the activity in practice.

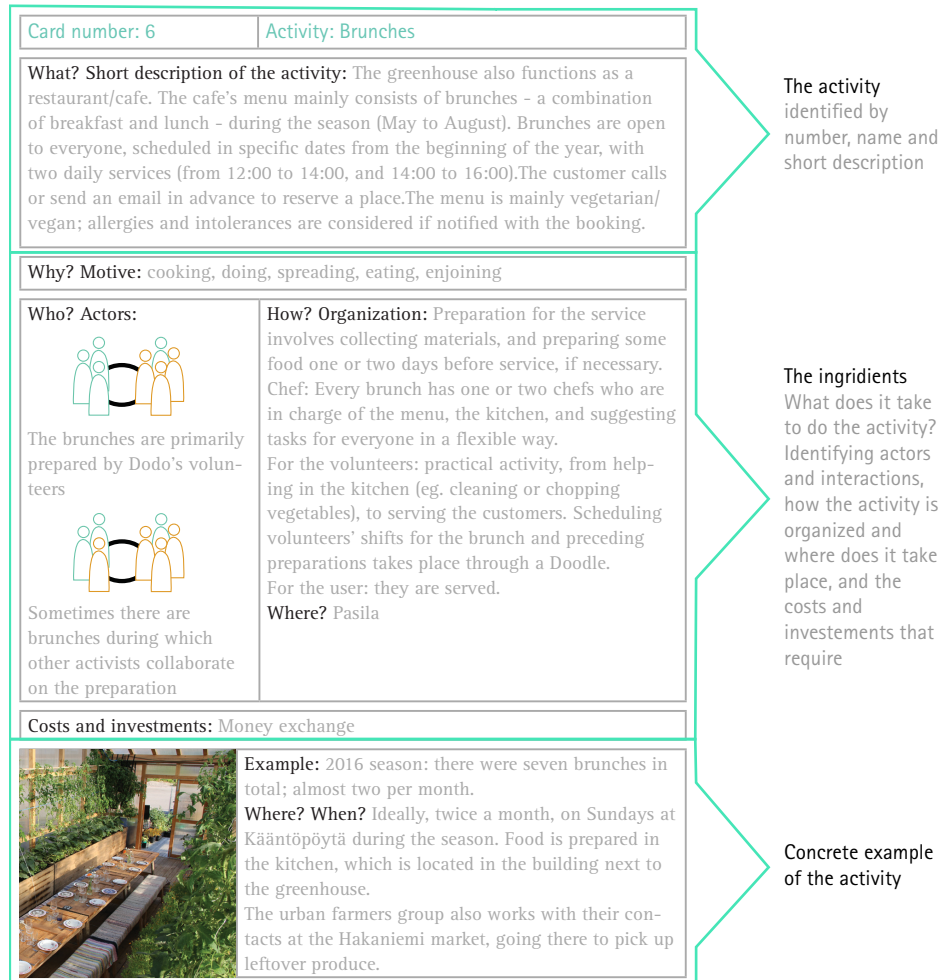


Figure 31: Explanation of the content of an activity card

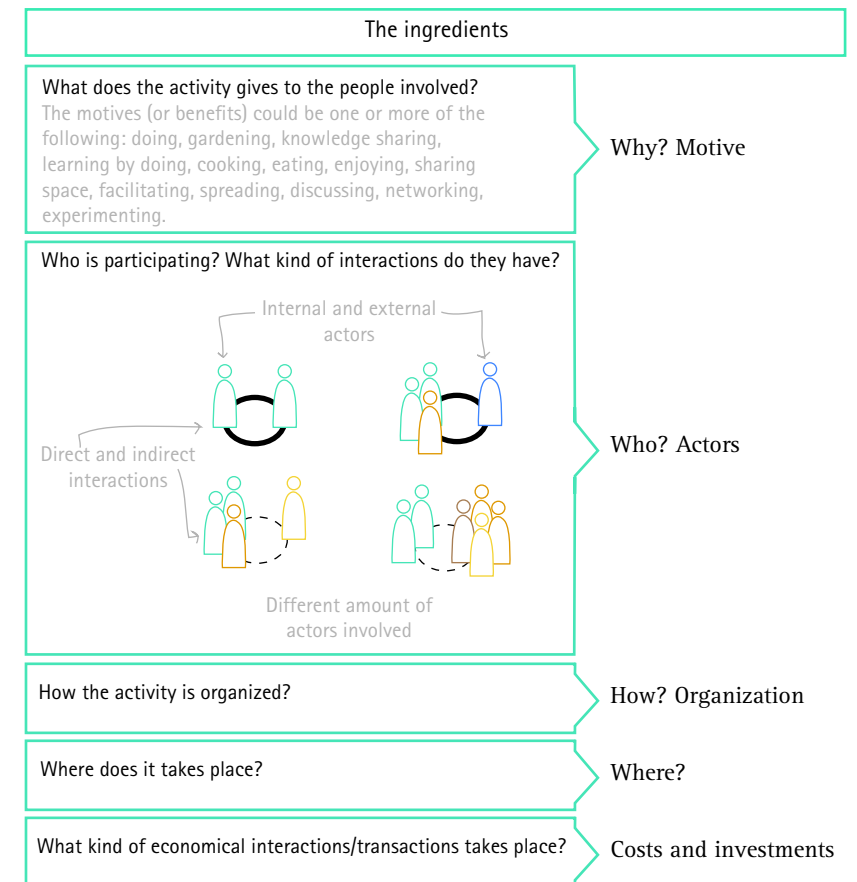
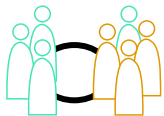
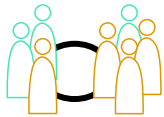





Figure 32: What kind of information can be found in the ingredients, and how some of this information is shown

5.3.3 | Examples of activity cards

In the following pages, as an example two of the 13 activities identified are classified in the activity cards (see appendix for full inventory). These two activities represents the various approaches of the group: one represents consumption -brunch- and the other one production -external gardens run by the organization. Such activities will be explored further in following sections.

Card number: 6	Activity: Brunch
What? Short description of the activity: The greenhouse also functions as a restaurant/cafe. The cafe's menu mainly consists of brunches - a combination of breakfast and lunch - during the season (May to August). Brunches are open to everyone, scheduled in specific dates from the beginning of the year, with two daily services (from 12:00 to 14:00, and 14:00 to 16:00). The customer calls or send an email in advance to reserve a place. The menu is mainly vegetarian/vegan; allergies and intolerances are considered if notified with the booking.	
Why? Motive: cooking, doing, spreading, eating, enjoining	
Who? Actors:  The brunches are primarily prepared by Dodo's volunteers  Sometimes there are brunches during which other activists collaborate on the preparation	How? Organization: Preparation for the service involves collecting materials, and preparing some food one or two days before service, if necessary. Chef: Every brunch has one or two chefs who are in charge of the menu, the kitchen, and suggesting tasks for everyone in a flexible way. For the volunteers: practical activity, from helping in the kitchen (eg. cleaning or chopping vegetables), to serving the customers. Scheduling volunteers' shifts for the brunch and preceding preparations takes place through a Doodle. For the user: they are served. Where? Pasila
Costs and investments: Money exchange	
	Example: 2016 season: there were seven brunches in total; almost two per month. Where? When? Ideally, twice a month, on Sundays at Kääntöpöytä during the season. Food is prepared in the kitchen, which is located in the building next to the greenhouse. The urban farmers group also works with their contacts at the Hakaniemi market, going there to pick up leftover produce.

Card number: 12	Activity: External gardens run by the organization
What? Short description of the activity: Communal gardens, part of a scheme similar to allotment gardens provided by the city: spaces rented for urban agriculture through a small fee to individuals or groups.	
Why? Motive: gardening, facilitating, spreading	
Who? Actors:  Volunteers/members of Dodo interact with other people or organizations that want to rent a space for gardening.	How? Organization: The request for space for gardening is done by email. Working party days are organized by the person in charge of the urban farmers group in spring. Where? Different parts of Helsinki, for instance Kalasatama harbour.
Costs and investments: Money exchange through rent of the bags/boxes	
	Example: Kalasatama garden Where? When? Kalasatama harbour construction space. Started in 2010 as part of the 'Kalasatama temporary' initiative as a bags garden, with 80 bags. The bags can be rented by anyone (individuals or groups) for a small fee. Recently (2015) the garden was moved because of changes to the construction site, with 180 wooden boxes replacing the bags.

5.4 | How is the harvest? What could be cooked with it?

This section will explore the role of the urban farmers group's narrative within their context (Helsinki), and some of the ways in which they have influenced it, or at least left a mark.

In the previous sections I have presented the group's story and activities, in order to understand and illustrate the actors, their interactions, and the materials that they used. Through an analysis of the story and activities I now turn to exploring their broader role over the following pages.

In How is the harvest? I interpret their current role by analyzing some of their activities, so as to understand how they interact and influence bottom-up and top-down approaches, as well as shaping urban dynamics. In What could be cooked with it? I identify some of their tools, understand their possible uses, and suggest potential reconfigurations that might influence their role in future.

5.4.1 | How is the harvest?

"I guess it's part of a bigger change in food culture in Helsinki because we have Ravintolapäivä - Restaurant Day - and people doing things themselves for each other without anyone telling them to do so. I think Kääntöpöytä is also part of that process, but it's difficult to say what's our part in that" (107)

Dodo's urban farmers group have been re-configuring their practice by modifying their activities and, through them, innovating towards a social impact (Manzini, 2015; Mazé 2014; Mulgan et al, 2007). So as to categorize and summarize some of those reconfigurations, I have situated some of their proposed activities in relation to a wider circular food system (figure 33) including 'the field' (production) and 'the table' (consumption) (as presented in the introduction).

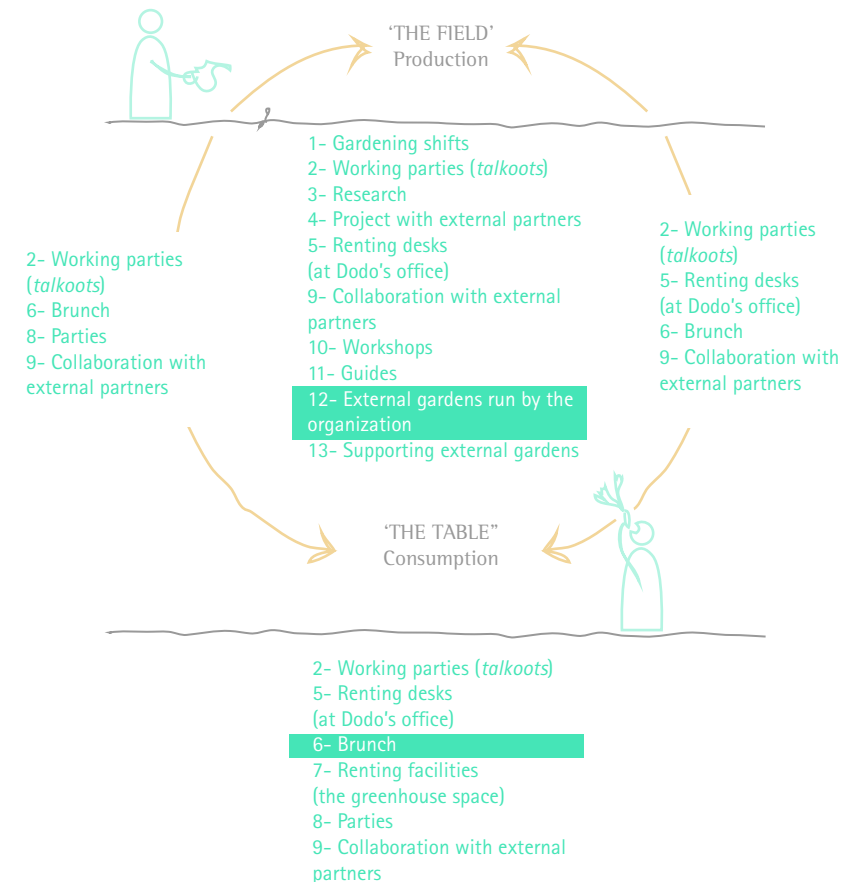


Figure 33: Dodo's activities in relationship to the food system. Two activities are highlighted for further analysis: Kalasatama garden (production), and the Turntable brunches (consumption).

Figure 33 illustrates how the group developed from initial discourse focused on food production, to the proposal of activities that address both: ‘the field’ and ‘the table’. They have also attempted to relate to other parts of the system, such as food waste. It is precisely this holistic approach which I believe has helped the urban farmers create an alternative narrative that so resonates with people. They have not only framed the issues from an original perspective, but have adapted and developed this perspective in relation to changing circumstances and opportunities. While not all food system issues have been allocated equal importance, the group does have something to say about almost all of it. Thus the elements to create a credible narrative are present and able to mobilize some proportion of people.

To illustrate in more detail a facet of the current role of the urban farmers group, and the impact they have had in Helsinki, I selected two specific activities: gardening in Kalasatama (field/production) and the cafe brunch service (table/consumption). These activities will be analyzed to understand how the group interacts with and influences both top-down and bottom-up approaches, as well as the ways in which they shape urban dynamics.

The Kalasatama garden (figure 34) re-configured the way in which urban gardening was presented, by facilitating space to rent, encouraging knowledge-sharing around garden practice, and even setting a physical example of urban gardening in the city. Before Dodo started promoting urban gardening and realised projects like the Kalasatama garden, the concept was limited to allotment gardens. These include restrictions, not least their limited availability which means people may be queued for years in order to be allocated one. The new form proposed by the urban farmers group expanded not only the

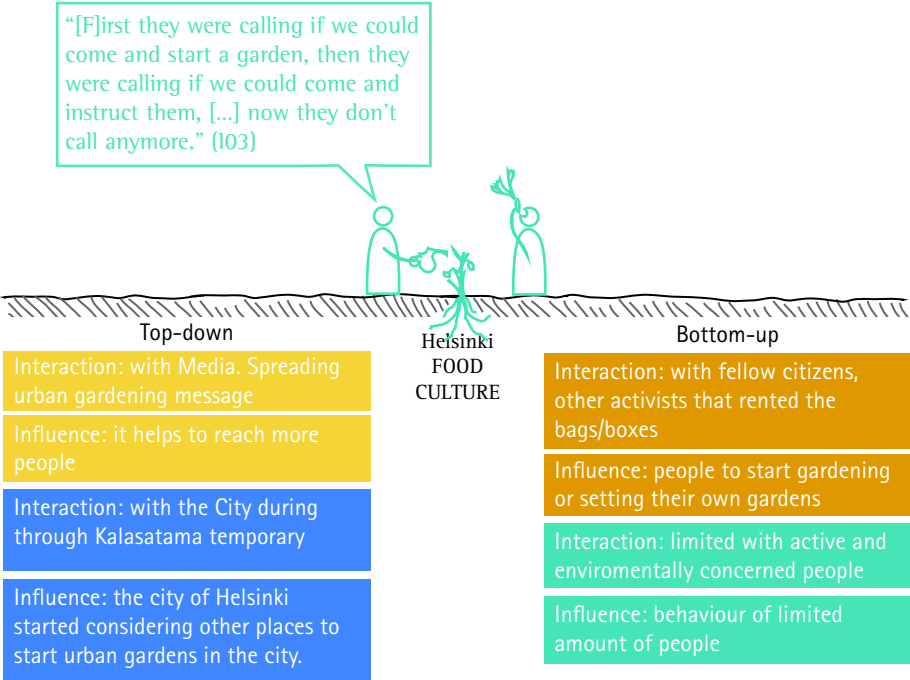


Figure 34: Some interactions with and influences from Dodo's urban farming group in terms of 'the field' (food production) and the Kalasatama garden.

space available for the practice, but also enabled gardening to occur in various parts of the city, as well as broadening accepted ideas about urban gardening itself.

Kalasatama garden helped Dodo to interact with the institutions who allowed them to start the practice, along with fellow citizens, other activists, and companies who rented bags and boxes. These interactions enabled them to develop their relationship with institutions in new ways, and facilitated the growth of new collaborative networks, while also further spreading their message.

The media played a key role in spreading ideas about urban gardening and the activities of Dodo's urban farmers group

to more disparate groups. During my involvement, I was able to verify the impact images of the gardens have on people (on the basis of informal talks and interviews), this being one of the most frequently cited reasons for people to approach the initiative. For instance, images of the Turntable cafe, and of urban gardening on the rooftop of the cable factory (Kaapelitehdas), gave people a concrete visual example of an urban garden, as well as providing the media with attractive pictures in relation to the topic.

“[A]ctually what is more influential [about] what we have been doing is that we have been in the media, and training other people and doing all that stuff” (I03)

Dodo’s urban farmers group interacts with both fellow citizens and other activists around urban gardening practice, though they recognize that their reach is limited since the majority of those active participants share similar concerns and ideologies. Although there is still some association of the practice with “hippies” (I04), others see it as a “privileged hobby” for those with the time or money to afford it (I06). Nonetheless, the group has been influencing people’s behaviours towards food production, sustainability, and conscious practices: initially, people needed help starting gardens, but now they are starting them independently.

“There’s always the question [of] whether it’s just preaching to the converted” (I09)

Other critical reflections from the group concern for instance the urban gardening in boxes. The wooden boxes scheme - for which the group is mainly known - has its own drawbacks and aspects to consider. For instance, the quality of the soil when practicing urban gardening in boxes can be seen as environmentally poor (I03, I04). Greater maintenance is required to prevent the soil from losing its nutrients, such as rotating the soil or adding fertilizers. As such, the Kalasatama garden’s soil was replaced when it changed location; it is for this reason that such importance is placed upon the production of compost at Turntable, to ensure the soil’s quality. However, even here time restraints on compost production create challenges (I04). Consequently, some members of the group consider start advocating more eagerly other practices, like the urban garden in Hermannin which promote more traditional planting directly into the soil (I03, I06), or even the concept of an edible park like Mustikkamaa, encouraging people to take care of the plants and vegetables communally, as opposed to renting an individual plot (I06). One of their aims is to make a “tribute to food” (I06), because although urban gardening is still done as a hobby, it can make participants reflect upon growing their own food, understanding seasonal produce (Botero & Marttila, 2016), and the impact that this has on the environment.

“[A]ctually I think we should continue [...] to talk more about global and local issues, not just the urban farming community” (I06)

“[Y]ou have to be critical, and of course you have to enjoy it.” (I06)

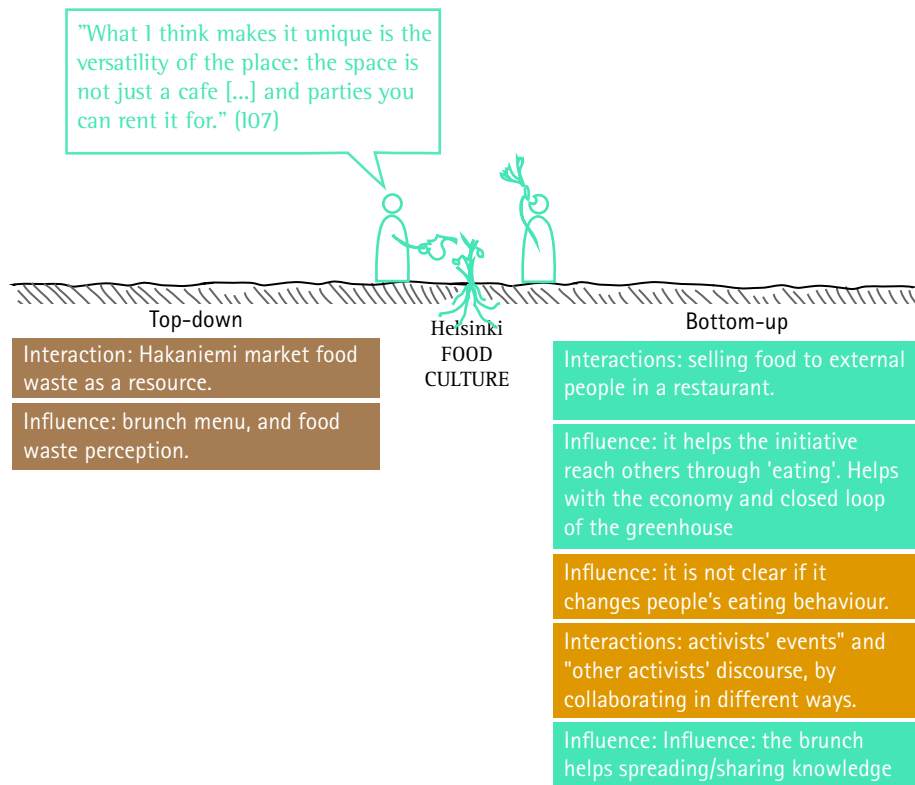


Figure 35: Some interactions and influences of Dodo's urban farming group regarding 'the table' (food consumption) and brunch at the Turntable cafe.

The urban farmers group's participation in Helsinki food production primarily comes from a consumer perspective: they are consumers who decided to have a say in their own food production. This dynamic is embodied by the Turntable greenhouse and experimental space. However, the construction of the greenhouse changed the group's approach towards urban gardening itself, and towards other outcomes like settling up a cafe. The practice of the cafe (figure 35) has led the initiative to interact with people in new ways through eating. Their brunches form a service provided during May to August

season, providing an important source of finance for a group which attempts to be economically self-sustainable.

"Of course we are not farmers. [...] [W]e are still consumers" (106)

"Similar to kind of [...] building [...] a church [...] or castle, strange things happen" (106)

New developments towards eating and physical space enabling activities, such as talks organized collaboratively at Pasila or joint food events, have broadened the group's interactions and collaborations with other activists. Brunches have been organized in connection with other events like Restaurant Day or OSCE (Open Source Circular Economy) days, as well as expanding collaboration with other groups, like the CISV organization volunteering for a brunch, or inviting From Waste to Taste to give a presentation about their work and to try to foster future collaboration. In this way, a network has been developed among those interested in and concerned about the same problems regarding food consumption.

"[F]ood has stories; an ecological teaching - but not preaching" (106)

Developing activities around eating brings questions concerning reach and critical viewpoints. Providing prepared food with a strong connection to environmental concerns, and with a conscious message, is the group's aim for the cafe. In spite of the brunches' popularity (the services are mostly fully booked), the impact or influence upon people's behaviour around eating is difficult to identify. The group also attempts to deliver a message in support of more sustainable eating practices - for instance, by utilizing the market's discarded food as ingredients, or stressing self provision by serving produce from the garden or greenhouse. Additionally, introductions are sometimes provided before food is served, sometimes even using graphic material around food security and the greenhouse's closed loop system.

"We don't want just to feed people - [we want] vegetarian and waste food and [it] must be good." (106)

Nevertheless, it remains questionable whether the message reaches the customers, and, even if it does, whether it is fully understood, absorbed, or acted upon. Compared with urban gardening practice, which produces 'tangible' gardens all around the city, individual decisions to consume or eat food in a more sustainable way are harder to verify.

In an attempt to influence their environment through the proposal of alternative and sustainable activities, the urban farmers group shapes urban dynamics (Castells, 1983; Mayer, 2006, 2013).

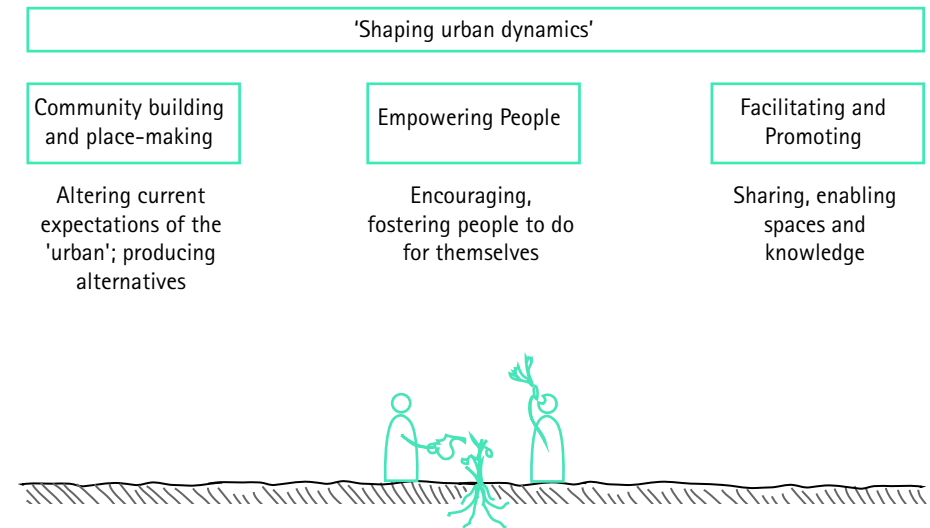


Figure 36: Three broad themes across which Dodo's urban farming group shapes urban dynamics.

To fully comprehend how the group does this, it is necessary to understand the three largest themes underpinning their aims. These themes (explained in figure 36) encapsulate the ways in which they shape the 'urban': community-building and placemaking, empowering people, and facilitating and promoting urban gardening in Helsinki.

Classifying the group's activities could be challenging: because they are mainly 'organic' in essence, lines blur and they could often be classified under more than one of their fundamental themes. Therefore, analysing these activities explored various perspectives, by contrasting my own classifications and understanding with those of some of the urban farmers themselves (see appendix for the analysis of the full inventory of the activities, pp 156).

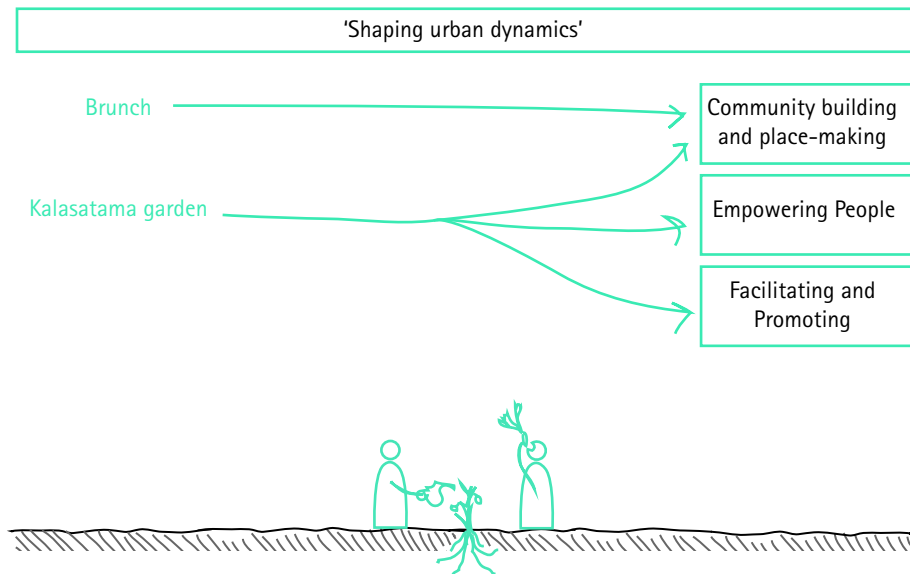


Figure 37: Classifying activities according to the themes could be challenging: some easily sit within one section, while others can have various interpretations.

To classify the activities, I first broke them into three primary themes, in order to understand the various impacts upon the actors or the context. To complement and challenge my taxonomy, I engaged Dodo members with a short activity during Dodo ORG days, allowing them to give me their views regarding the activities (see more details in appendix pp 173). What I proposed involved them clustering summarized activity cards under the three main themes, as well as assessing the motives of each activity.

The three themes sometimes overlap and even combine in the process of classification; even though some activities were easily allocated under a specific theme (such as the brunches), others were difficult to place under only one theme (eg. the Kalasatama garden - figure 37). This exercise helped not only to reflect and complement my analysis of the activities, but

also gave new points of view about them (e.g. additional themes proposed by some urban farmers like 'ideological and political work' and 'happy necessity'; see appendix for further information).

Throughout its years of existence, the urban farmers group has been able to organize several activities around food and urban gardening, contributing in some way to the shaping of urban dynamics and Helsinki's food culture over this period. In this, the last visual analysis, time is the subject, and the clear evolution in the influence of the group's practice. Consecutive actions expanded their influence in restrained but tangible ways (eg. from the guerrilla gardening to helping others start their own gardens). Experience gained over the years, with expertise and knowledge built upon it, enables them, for instance, to reach out to authorities and suggest production of a urban gardening guide for the public, to be provided by the city. Hence, after many years of voluntary work, the urban farmers group managed to communicate with the authorities and start to exert an influence over information available to people about urban gardening.

5.4.2 | What could be cooked with it?

“[I]t feels [...] [a] bit too early to think about a story [...] because the whole thing is pretty recent so it’s difficult to think about it in [these] terms” (107)

My aim was to make evident, through visualization, the ways in which context helps to shape and encourage - or discourage - grassroots social innovation initiatives. Graphs and timelines allowed me to connect the initiative’s actions to a factual context, in order to create a broader picture of how the initiative has developed. To do so, I combined and re-interpreted tools utilized by other designers (references given in section 2.2.3); for instance, drawing upon the way in which Creative Communities shared information about the initiatives through cards.

It could be said that visualizing a narrative for designers/ researchers, as well as for the initiative itself, constitutes ‘narrative-making’. I will accordingly identify the tools used to create and share the group’s story, in order to speculate whether some elements could be used by the initiative to give examples of further reconfigurations.

Visual tools	
Story: storytelling around the initiative (what they did and how they did it) and introducing the context: what was happening and how this interacts with the initiative.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• code for identifying the actors• pictures with notes added (about actors, materials, interactions, etc)• timeline
Activity cards: synthesis and classification of the activities. What they do and how they do it: what kind of resources are needed, actors, etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• card• picture to illustrate the activity• code for identifying the actors and their interactions• clear separation of information (the activity, the ingredients, and an example)

Table 04: Visual tools utilized for the story and activity cards.

Visualizing 'alternative' narratives

How could visual narratives be embedded into grassroots practices?

The answer to this question is much more complex than I initially appreciated through my research, but I can, however, provide some ideas in this direction. For instance, the simple practice of printing pictures and making notes on the images - similar to my approach - could help an initial visualization. The importance of visualizing something is in making things seem more concrete. For example, to my surprise, during ORG days, one of the activities developed by Dodo members involved arranging pictures according to date and adding information. During this first attempt at a timeline the context

was not represented, but the need to organize the pictures stresses how important intuitive step can be; this is still on display in the Dodo office. To capitalise upon this intuitive first step, for instance by developing a code to identify the actors and the context, it could be easier to understand what has already been carried out, as well as to visualize possible reconfigurations, or trigger ideas of possible new collaborations, or where to ask for funding.

Dealing with 'the field' - production of food - through urban gardening practice and experimentation, and showing and sharing their knowledge with others, is a familiar part of the group's story. However, there is no material telling the entire story. Hence, embedding the practice of understanding the group's own narrative could prove a positive way to share the story, with both internal and external actors.

Having access to their story could also enable the group to share it further, for instance with the media. While conducting interviews the media's importance in spreading the group's ideas was evident, despite the farmers not releasing official press releases. Instead, similar practices to those already used with mailing lists can see some messages promoted on social media and blogs (communications channels that they also already use). This enables the continuation of an informal relationship with the media, but with additional material to support their narrative and hook people, with not only urban gardening, but also broader environmental concerns.

Narrative-making put into practice by grassroots social innovations can help improve their own understanding, refining what they can develop or re-configure further, and possibly what will this entail (e.g who they need to contact, what partnerships they could develop more, etc).

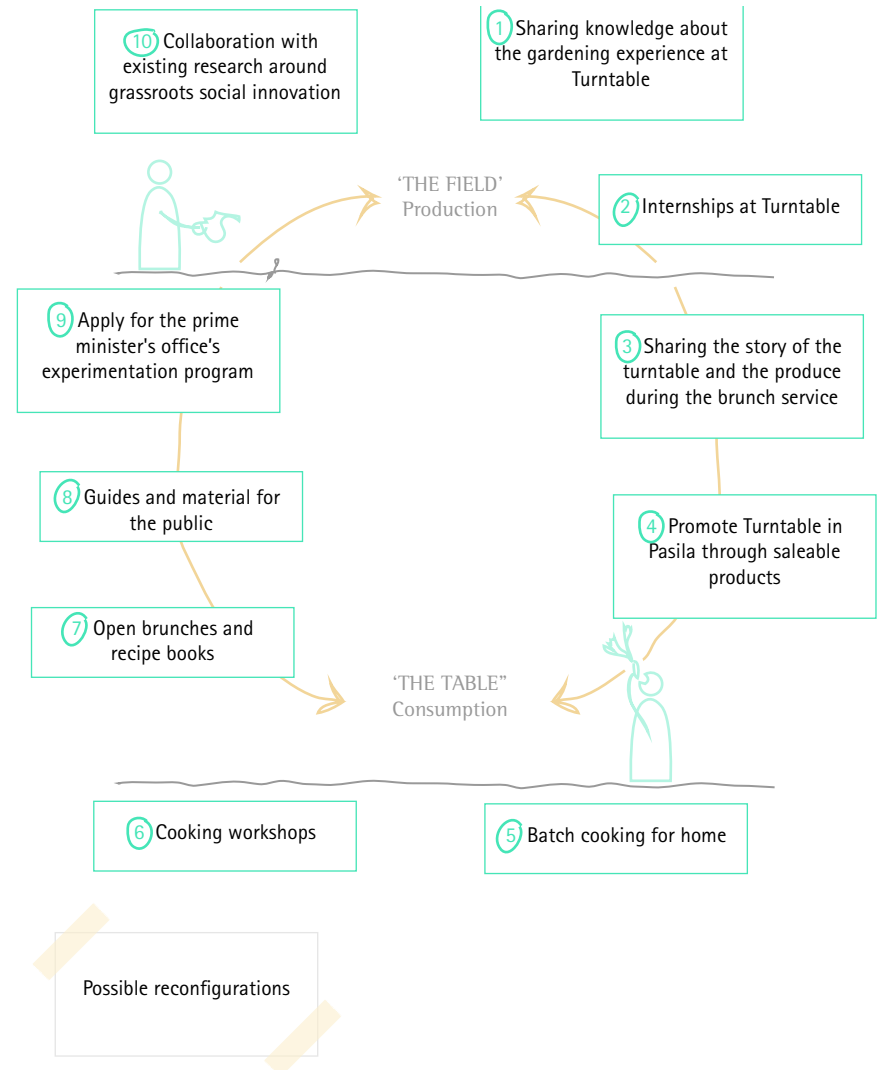


Figure 38: Suggestions of possible directions and new reconfigurations.

Envisioning possible reconfigurations

How can visual narratives help to envision new reconfigurations?

Having explored their story and their activities through the development of a visual narrative, I will combine knowledge gained in this process and information gathered in interviews to identify possible reconfigurations, development or synergies.

1- Sharing knowledge about the gardening experience at Turntable

One of the strengths of Dodo's urban farmers group is that they share their knowledge with others. For instance, their period of experimentation with different crops in the outside garden and greenhouse could provide knowledge that can be shared, clarifying details about seasonal food, and sharing their experiences of certain crops (what is better to plant and how, etc). The group could also share the ways in which they managed to take care of the plants (fertilizers and products to protect the plants from pests and disease); it might be possible to spread knowledge about how people could develop and produce more environmentally friendly and homemade fertilizer and plant protection solutions.

2- Internships at Turntable

An example could be the experience of an agricultural student interning at the greenhouse and helping with technical elements (e.g. research into urine as fertilizer). The practice of internships for university students could be something that the initiative offers, with the benefit of the knowledge exchanged.

3- Sharing the story of the turntable and the produce during the brunch service

Narrative could also be of use in regards to 'the table' (food consumption), with the Turntable brunch services as the group's working model of 'eating'. Already, this year, volunteers in the cafe welcomed guests by sharing the story of

the location, and the provenance of the meals' ingredients. Similarly, during some of the brunch services, cubes displaying information about food security developed for the 'fork print' talks about food, in 2014, were placed on the tables.

This practice could be developed further, with a clearer narrative, and perhaps a greater reach, in order to provoke thought around particular issues.

The group's collaboration with Hakaniemi market - the use of their discarded food - is not clear to everyone, but could be helpful in starting a conversation about food waste; explaining what they do and sharing facts about this wastage.

4- Promote Turntable in Pasila through saleable products

Dodo currently sells the honey produced by its bees at some parties, or through their network of individuals. Products such as this could be offered and sold in markets around Pasila, generating revenue, while also promoting Turntable and the idea of local production, and with the opportunity to reach new audiences.

5- Batch cooking for home

To promote and introduce the behaviour of eating and cooking more sustainably, a practice introduced in The Illustrated Guide to Participatory City ('Participatory City' ORG, 2016) could be introduced: 'batch cooking for home'; gathering at Dodo's kitchen to collectively produce food that people can take to their homes to eat during the week. Such a practice could not only promote collective consumption of food (Castells, 1983; Mayer, 2006) in new ways, but also kickstart an alternative practice of cooking, with an emphasis on sharing.

6- Cooking workshops

Organized workshops, like those Dodo already provides for the public, but with focus on cooking. Such workshops could be a way to promote more sustainable eating and cooking, for example for students, since this group eats cheaply and may not have much cooking experience. The workshops could focus on different themes, such as discarded food, or how to utilize food to the maximum.

7- Open brunches and recipe books

An open brunch, where customers can participate in the preparation of their own food (ie, taking the role ordinarily performed by volunteers), eating together, and understanding where the food comes from and why these practices are important.

This could not only teach people how to cook and to share, but also to understand when food can no longer be eaten - but that it could be composted. A recipe book, allowing people to try things out at home (an equivalent to Dodo's printed or downloadable urban gardening guide) could fill a similar role.

8- Guides and material for the public

Helsinki city, with the marketing program Hel Yeah! promoting urban culture, incentivized many activities that contribute to the city's image (Mayer, 2013).

Even though this approach, and the city's interest, could be utilized by grassroots to potentiate or develop their practices, questions remain about the minimal political empowerment that the interaction would generate (ibid). However, it was clear from the activity at ORG days that the Dodo urban farmers think of material like the [guide](#) as ideological and

political work. So, how can they increase the strength, or at least visibility, of their political impact?

One method would be to develop more material to share with the public, introducing more sustainable ways of thinking. For instance, in the new [Helsinki cultural culinary strategy](#) the current leader is positive about collaboration with others. Making contacting and discussing ways in which they could collaborate with the city - which is currently developing printed and visual material to promote food and urban culture - could further promote sustainability and environmental thinking.

9- Apply for the prime minister's office's experimentation program

As well as growing interest in funding projects and research around social innovation (Mazé, 2013), there is, in [Finland, a growing interest in experimentation](#) (Kokeileva suomi, 2016). This provides a big opportunity for Dodo as an organization, since their practices are founded on the basis of experimentation. Of course, the challenge is in the framing and the applications required for funding a pilot, or to discuss with the prime minister's office how to approach this. Two different approaches could be: showcase the urban farmers group's story as an example of experimentation, or develop material digitally. The first option could be achieved through the utilization of some of the same tools I have used in mapping their story, but focusing on the issues that the prime minister's office want to highlight. The second option relates to the government programme which has as its starting point in knowledge and education "[n]ew learning environments and digital materials to comprehensive schools". Hence, Dodo could reconfigure their current material as digital material for schools.

10- Collaboration with existing research around grassroots social innovation

A research project that University of Helsinki is developing about activism - “**Civic activism as a resource for the metropolis**” - could provide important information about grassroots, as well as giving grassroots projects valuable information about others’ activities.

In developing a ‘Databank’ on urban activism (with local and international examples) (Faehnle, 2016), collaboration with the ‘Dwellers in Agile Cities’ project could allow Dodo to showcase their experience with the urban farmers group, or even think in new ways about collaborating with other initiatives. Such a project will additionally propose recommendations to city governments regarding how they could interact and support “civic activism” (ibid), also giving a chance to influence how they see this interactions according to their experience.

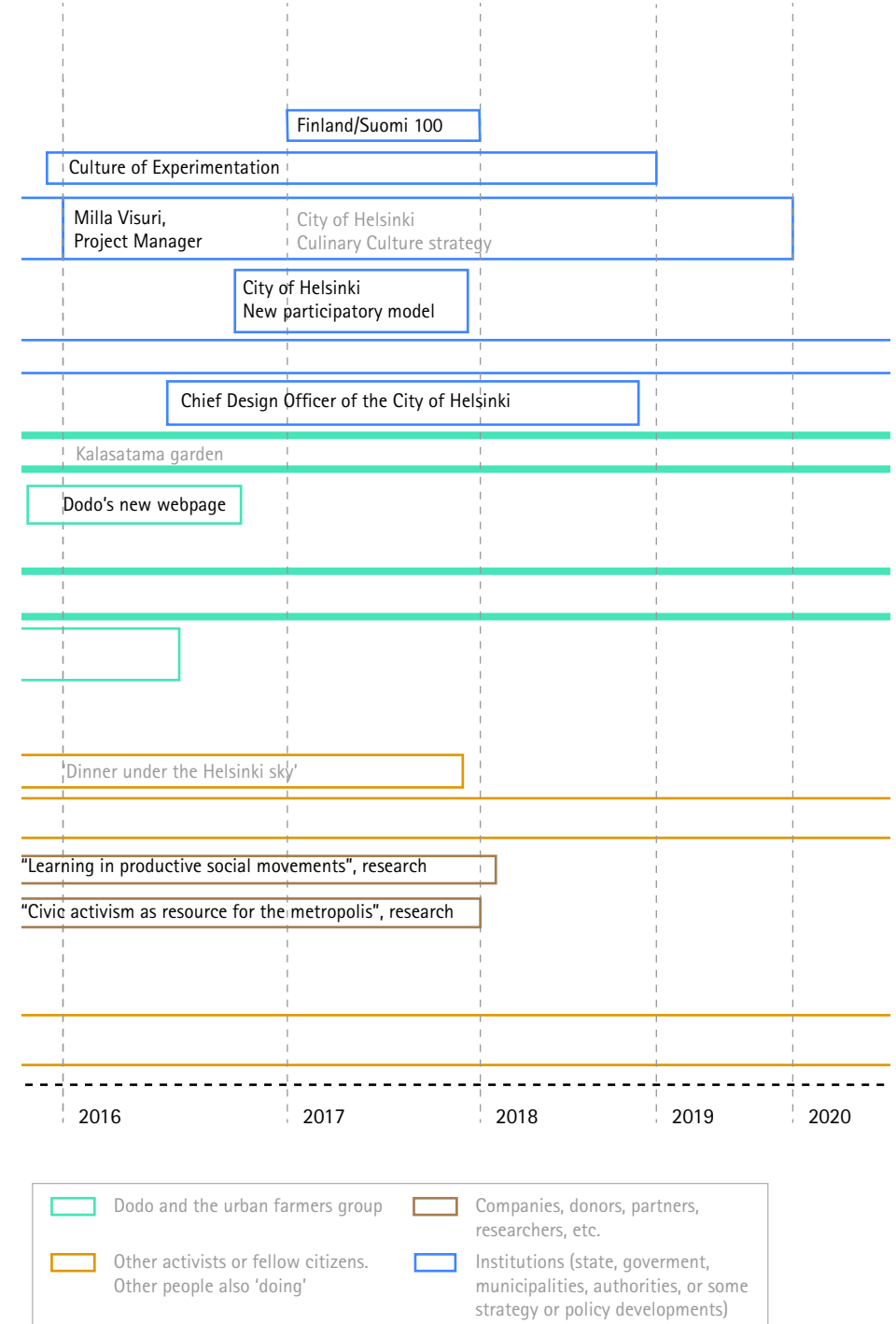


Figure 39: Near-future possibilities that Dodo could take advantage of

Chapter 6 | Discussion and Conclusions

The aim of this study was to understand and learn about the alternative narratives grassroots social innovations propose towards more sustainable food production and consumption behaviours. I have argued that these narratives are built in a large part by concrete activities. To visualize some elements of those narratives I engaged with the initiative to explore their practices, share their proposals, and understand their motivations in relation to the research question:

What kind of ‘alternative’ narratives do grassroots social innovation initiatives develop towards more sustainable lifestyles, and what kind of ‘visual’ narrative could be produced to present and analyse them?

As I have outlined throughout, grassroots social innovation initiatives develop alternative and multidimensional narratives, in which time and context are fundamental for their understanding. Context and time connect the activities of the initiatives to their surrounding and illustrating their synergies. Through their activities the initiatives interact with actors and space, creating an alternative narrative which interacts with ‘mainstream’ narratives, sometimes by appropriating them, sometimes by contributing to the narratives of other actors.

I propose that visual narratives can be produced to better understand how grassroots social innovations’ interactions amongst themselves and with their surroundings emerge and develop over time. Categorizing and clustering interactions, materials, and activities might provide tools for actors and researchers to situate themselves, and evaluate their actions and influences. By illustrating the story of Dodo’s urban farmers

group - with a focus on Turntable (Kääntöpöytä) - I was able to identify their motives, the actors involved and their activities, and thus provide a first step towards those goals. As a designer I also want to explore how visualizations of such narratives could help not only understanding of activities, previous experiences, and interactions, but also to enable the envisioning of possible interactions and synergies, and in doing so help project their goals and actions in the future. However, my main purpose within these pages remains an acknowledgement of the work towards more sustainable food production and consumption in Helsinki, that the initiative has been carrying out for several years.

I started by working on the assumption that presenting the group's narrative, through combining the different materials collected, would enable the identification and understanding of the ways in which they: interact and influence top-down (institutions') and bottom-up (fellow citizens and other activists') approaches. Interactions within the narrative and activities carried out, as the content of the narrative, are explored and analyzed, while influences and suggestions are explored as the role of the narrative.

The interaction of grassroots social innovation initiatives with fellow citizens and other activists are probably the most direct ones, as well as being those which develop new networks and strengthen existing ones. Through interacting with people, in various ways, directly through the activities proposed by the initiative, and indirectly through support given or knowledge shared, they influence the behaviour of individuals towards food and more sustainable practices. These effects may be modest as the reach is still limited, but are tangible nonetheless. Although some practices have started to be seen as becoming mainstream (such as buying organic or starting an urban garden), more effort is still required.

To comprehend the interactions between grassroots social innovation initiatives and institutional organisations, understanding and including information about context was key. As such, visualizations helped me to understand not only what the initiative has been developing, but connect these actions to broader elements of food culture. This clarified how important timing is for such collaborations, and how strategies or 'creative city policies', marketing the city towards more tenable urban living or food options, ease the development of some specific initiatives. While creative city policies allow grassroots to produce some alternatives to the mainstream, this type of collaboration is not necessarily consistent or reliable.

These collaborations involve not only time, but also the 'form' of the initiative. Generally, grassroots social innovation initiatives change form or adapt, particularly when collaborating with the government in some way (changes caused, for example, by the need for a registered NGO in order to apply for funding). There is a will to support grassroots in Finland, for instance with programmes such as 'Experimentation Finland' or with actions like Kalasatama Temporary. This type of collaboration is nevertheless worth attempting to understand better, as governments identify the value or revenue these initiatives may give to the city or country - yet the balance between responsibility and political power in these cases is questionable.

Context may highlight obstacles or opportunities for grassroots social innovation initiatives. In terms of opportunities, this might be situations which allow the initiative to further change and develop. How accessible the government or institutions are and whether citizens are welcoming changes or otherwise. Observing context can further the understanding

that timing is crucial for these kinds of activities' success or otherwise. For instance, a clear example of the Finnish alternative food scene is Restaurant Day. Initially an illegal day-long action that saw food sold in various ways across some Finnish cities, designed to counter bureaucracy within the food hygiene system. The initiative quickly grabbed the attention of the public, the media, and the authorities, and the event has subsequently grown and grown (both nationally and internationally), causing Finnish legislation to be changed, while also modifying the ways Finnish people relate to the variety of food and where to get it. The support of grassroots social innovation initiatives could lead to the possibility of other comparable actions.

Instead of advancing the language required to collaborate more fully with, for example, policy experts (Botero & Saad-Sulonen, 2013), this work attempts to develop a design-based visual language through which to understand grassroots. I also provide initial suggestions for different ways in which they may start adding narratives and information to their existent archives. That is to say, I intend to stress the importance of developing narrative-making as a key activity in enabling grassroots social innovations to gain better understanding of themselves, and what they may be able to develop or reconfigure further. Such activity is important for both the initiatives themselves and designers/researchers, to generate understanding, the sharing of their practice with others, and ways in which they may reconfigure and even envision these reconfigurations together.

“Moreover, is the co-design setting the only cause that keeps the link alive between the people and the designers? Can there be other types of engagements and partnerships?”
(Botero & Saad-Sulonen, 2013)

In their paper, Botero and Saad-Sulonen (2013) discuss commitment to “communal endeavours” (what I call grassroots social innovation), but their final questions about links between these endeavours and “other types of engagements and partnerships” sums up what I wanted to better understand. How can a designer learn from grassroots social innovation initiatives, while at the same time considering other methods of supporting further alternative activities?

In my engagement with Dodo I learnt that I do not need to design either tangible handouts, graphics for products, etc, or proposals directly derived from what I have learned as a designer - such as the proposal of workshops and/or attempts to ‘solve’ the organisation’s problems. By contributing to existing activities as a member of the group - even by simply lending an extra hand - I could help enable proposals made through discussion and mutual understanding. Participants of grassroots social innovation initiatives are necessarily entangled with many issues and problems, and, working voluntarily, often do not have time for concerns besides planning and carrying out their activities. To understand how I may contribute, gathering information on the group’s activities to create a holistic view of the initiative would enable the visualization of possible reconfigurations and relationships, and could ultimately help to formulate a strategic view. Although only an initial idea, this pushes me to think in a practical and concise way; providing flexible, adaptable suggestions which could be reconfigured and transformed (and which could be co-designed).

I not only recognize the work that Dodo’s urban farmers group has been doing, but also compile this information in English - the importance of which I would like to stress, given that this seems to be lacking elsewhere, according to other non-Finnish speakers’ comments at events and talks.

Visual references to gardening illustrations and the concrete records of the group's own images connect their story as closely as possible to their activities and spirit. These visualizations attempt to reveal the complexity of the urban farmers group's activities, while also rendering their story accessible (Schoffelen et al, 2015), so as to not only spread awareness about what grassroots social innovations initiatives are doing, but also to visibly and clearly demonstrate the complexity this entails (time, space, interactions).

Time was essential for exploration and development of the visualizations: it was necessary to understand not only what the initiative was attempting to achieve through their activities, but also their underlying messages and methods. Time also helped gain trust, by creating a bond with the individuals in the group, and allowing the growth of my own understanding of what a designer-researcher could be. This enabled me to see from another perspective and ensure that the group's story and my suggestions did not too closely emulate each other, but provided them with ideas they were welcome to change or even discard.

Designers having long-term relationships with initiatives (Hillgren, Seravalli & Emilson, 2011) so as to better understand their activities allows them to propose stronger collaborative concepts. As such, designers' engagement is not only necessary for better understanding of the initiative, but it is also crucial that they be aware of what is happening in the surrounding context, around legislation, governmental action, citizens' proposals, etc. In this sense, working in a multidisciplinary team, including designers, could help to more fully understand the bigger picture. In this way, the designer could be considered a 'node' that connects the dots, or a joint that gives movement or flexibility to the different

parts; either expediting projects, or providing additional outside consideration.

As per Björgvinsson, Ehn, and Hillgren (2012), my intention with the case study was to explore 'innovation' in connection with an "historically and geographically located phenomenon". The importance of designers sharing and disseminating the message of grassroots social innovation is a position clearly shared by many researchers (Wu, Whalen, & Koskinen, 2015; Manzini, 2015; Penin, Forlano, & Staszowski, 2012; Botero & Saad-Sulonen, 2008; Meroni, 2009). The case presented in the thesis is an atypically well-structured grassroots social innovation initiative which intends to reconsider and improve services (brunches, for instance). However, it is important to note that many other grassroots would prefer to remain informal and organic (Wu, Whalen, & Koskinen, 2015) - challenging designers and researchers to consider different ways to support them, or even to step aside.

Bottom-up efforts are being pursued and fostered by citizens all over the world. These are changing how people live in their cities. Nevertheless, connection between the different levels is still required, and it is in this transition that design can help to identify gaps or opportunities for action.

6.1 | Reflections, limitations and further research

“[O]ne of the things to remember as a designer (it’s part of where my criticism about design comes from) but also about how politics is working, is that we have this obsession with finding solutions to problems and we don’t even know what the [...] problems are – so instead of describing, [or] asking questions [about] what is going on, people want to help. So people think that they can help by imposing solutions.” (108)

Having spent considerable time with this theme I am aware of certain limitations and possibilities for developing the work. In the subsequent paragraphs I will outline some of the most salient.

1- In this work my focus has been on the activities surrounding Turntable (Kääntöpöytä) and the urban farmers volunteering there. The case study focuses on both the initiative and the people related to it, but does not, at the moment, take into consideration a broader spectrum of people and actors. In this sense, the interviews, observations and analysis are focused upon people connected with the initiative; the study does not encompass a wider range of citizens or other less closely connected actors. Hence, further studies could complement this one by concentrating upon the voices of other actors, such as the customers of the brunch or other activities; those who rent the greenhouse for events; people who commissioned the

urban farmers to help them start a garden, and even the ones who used the guide to do it themselves. Interactions with both fellow citizens and other activists could also be investigated.

2- Visualizations here were used strictly as an instrument for data collection and the interpretation of my own research; gathering information and collating it into a coherent and attractive outcome (building the narrative). However, the question remains whether these visualizations are ultimately helpful for the initiative in developing their practice, or even for sharing their activities with others. There are some positive signs (eg. activity developed during ORG days which involved organizing pictures of some Dodo activities by time), but more work is necessary in developing it in conjunction with the initiative. Further development of the activity cards, for example, could entail participatory activities akin to that I developed for ORG days.

The sometimes discouraging difficulties I faced during this activity, and in many other interactions with the group, due to not speaking Finnish, should be noted. I nevertheless recognize the importance of participatory methods in continuing to further develop the visual narratives and other tools to better understand what information would be of use to the initiative. Similarly, story structure and visual elements could be used as a recipe applicable to other initiatives’ stories to see if their viable element to illustrate other cases.

3- The analysis made in this thesis has been the product of an initial exploration of these initiatives. Due to my inability to read Finnish, there is much information that has not reached these pages. This is of course not only a question of translation; it also relates to biases and limitations deriving from my own background. A further study could benefit from a mul-

tidisciplinary process (such as Penin, Forlano, & Staszowski, 2012); a team of this kind could analyse more deeply by drawing upon varied backgrounds and perspectives.

4- Designers can certainly contribute to the initiatives and impact upon their influence. This does not, however, suggest that a positive effect is intrinsic to design. Some design literature can misguide and create misunderstanding by fostering “highly positive rhetoric on the role and impact of design in society” (Sangiorgi, 2011), but sometimes without specifying the way in which this can be achieved. This encourages warranted criticism from others disciplines about the ways designers proceed with social innovation (see Murray and Berglund, chapter two, for example), as well as from other designers themselves (see Hilgren, including Murray criticism). The study could be further complemented by a critical exploration of these issues.

5- This exploration was entangled with ethical questions and conflicts given my role as both participant and researcher. During the process my relationship to the initiative has also changed: after initially volunteering, I then decided to use the group as my thesis’ single case study. Thus my engagement with the organization may be seen as contributing some degree of bias to the thesis. Even though the role of design was not explicitly a part of my research question or study, it was one way in which to explore the means, the role, and the limits of design regarding grassroots social innovation. The process is my personal search to understand more critically how an expert designer interested in social innovation can support these kind of initiatives, directly or indirectly, by first learning about and coming to understand them. Hence, I decided at an early stage that the thesis would not be related to co-design tools or methods, but would instead focus upon

ways in which engagement enabled me to understand how to tell the story of an initiative through design tools like visualization. Different approaches could subsequently be taken for further studies, by including participatory methods and other forms of engagement from the beginning.

Global challenges become more complex on a daily basis. Such complex challenges require a variety of actors and responses. Grassroots social innovation initiatives form one approach to tackling these issues in a local and experimental way - one that needs to continue developing. These initiatives’ proposals consider local knowledge, giving them solid opportunities to influence behaviour in their closer context. However, these initiatives need support to start and develop. Design can support them, for instance by telling their stories and continuing to explore ways in which they may form a link between policymakers and citizens (Botero & Saad-Sulonen, 2008). Although there are already efforts in these directions, much work and reflection between initiatives and designers is necessary to promote alternatives and to try to make sustainable practices an everyday choice.

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| Online sources

Dodo's online presence

Dodo: <http://dodo.org/>

Turntable: <http://kaantopoyta.fi/>

Kalasatama garden and other urban farmers events: <http://kaupunkiviljely.fi/>

Dodo's flickr: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/dodoorg/>

Helsinki's urban gardening map: <https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?ll=60.18574500000002%2C24.94068100000004&spn=0.051209%2C0.09613&hl=en&t=m&msa=0&z=12&source=embed&ie=UTF8&mid=1EOYEfoSY-EF0K5cy2a-TCtT1rpVE>

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URBACT: <http://urbact.eu/sustainable-food-urban-communities>

Capital growth London: <http://www.capitalgrowth.org/>

From waste to taste: <http://waste2taste.com/>

Vegan kiosk Jäno: <http://janokioski.fi/en/main-page/>

Appendix

Interviews

| **First round of interviews:** experts, between June and August 2015. These first interviews attempted to understand how people talk about food in Helsinki, and how Dodo works: its structure, constituent parts, etc.

Date	Who?	Where?
26.06.2015	Timo Santala	His office in Teurastamo
30.06.2015	Johanna Mäkelä	Espresso Edge Cafe on Liisankatu
04.08.2015	Kirmo Kivelä	Kääntöpöytä
06.07.2015	Maria Nordlund	Her apartment

| **Second round of interviews:** volunteers/members of Dodo, between November and December 2015, focused on the story of the urban gardening group.

Questions used as reference for the interviews

- In what way are you related to the urban gardening group or Kääntöpöytä?
- Are you Dodo member? How long/since when?
- What do you do? Do you have a role here?
- How long have you been involved in this?
- What do you think Kääntöpöytä and the urban gardening group are trying to do (or are doing) with the idea of food culture and food in Helsinki?

-What do you like here? What makes it unique? Or, what are its characteristics?

-What story can you tell me about it?

-I'm interested in building a story of the Dodo urban gardening group and Kääntöpöytä; how do you imagine that story could be? Can you think of any graphic references? (Eg, pictures, illustrations, graphics, colours)

-My intention is to have 'one version' of the story.

However, what could make you feel that you are part of that story? (How would you feel 'represented'?)

-Is there something I didn't ask but you think I should know? Or something else to share?

Date	Who?	Where?
24.11.2015	Maria Nordlund (I01)	Pasila, Dodo's office
15.12.2015	Pinja Sipari (I03)	Cafe Suvanto, Vallilla
15.12.2015	Kai Granqvist (I04)	Gaudeamus cafe, Kaisaniemi
15.12.2015	Sauli Kinnunen (I05)	Gaudeamus cafe, Kaisaniemi
16.12.2015	Jaakko Lehtonen (I06)	Pasila, Dodo's office
17.12.2015	Janne Löppönen (I07)	Gaudeamus cafe, Kaisaniemi
18.12.2015	Eeva Berglund (I08)	CS space, Arabia
18.12.2015	Kirmo Kivelä (I02)	Pasila, Dodo's kitchen
21.12.2015	Lasse Tarkiainen (I09)	University of Helsinki, Unioninkatu
22.12.2015	Katja Seppinen (I10)	Cafe Picnic, Kurvi

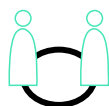
Full inventory of activity cards

Card number: 1	Activity: Gardening shifts
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What? Short description of the activity: The gardening shifts (watering weeks) are organized so individual volunteers have responsibility for taking care of the garden over one week.

Why? Motive: gardening, doing

Who? Actors:



Direct interaction among volunteers/members

How? Organization: The shifts are scheduled before the season starts (by processing an on-line Doodle calendar page) and shared with all volunteers through the mailing list and a private Facebook group.

The person doing the shift contacts those working the preceding and subsequent shift in order to exchange keys and share information about what tasks need to be performed (e.g. watering, mixing compost, etc). For further questions, coordinators can be contacted through email or on Facebook.

Where? Pasila

Costs and investments: Voluntary basis



Example: Gardening shifts during 2016

Where? When? Every week from May to August, at Kääntöpöytä. This year Kääntöpöytä coordinators extended the 'gardening shifts' calendar to 12 weeks/shifts, so there were more than in previous years (e.g. seven shifts between July-August 2015).

Card number: 2	Activity: Working parties (<i>talkoots</i>)
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What? Short description of the activity: A *talkoot* is a hands-on activity where volunteers/members gather to work on a shared project. The structure and duration of a talkoot vary depending on the task in question. It is one of the principal ways that the urban farmers group learn and share knowledge at Turntable.

Why? Motive: gardening, doing, knowledge sharing

Who? Actors:



The amount of people varies depending on the specific *talkoot*. The roles also vary: sometimes someone may be in a leading role giving clear instructions, or they may be more organic and flexible.

How? Organization: Ordinarily, *talkoots* are related to gardening tasks and take place ideally once a week during the Kääntöpöytä season. However, some talkoots are organized for other necessary tasks; these could be related to other themes the organization works with (e.g. alternative energy).

Where? Pasila

Costs and investments: Voluntary basis

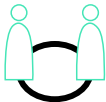
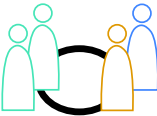


Example: *Talkoot* to build the furniture for the greenhouse with discarded wood material.

Where? When? Once, at Kääntöpöytä, 2012, an artist lead the *talkoot*, in a similar form to a workshop (a specialist leading volunteers). Constructive *talkoot* with wood materials.

Card number: 3	Activity: Research
<p>What? Short description of the activity: Systematic experimentation (learning by doing) results in tangible documentation to show and share with others. Allowing the group to share their knowledge and have it be acknowledged by others gives the possibility of reaching and conversing with academic researchers about the topic.</p>	

Why? Motive: learning by doing, sharing knowledge

<p>Who? Actors:</p>  <p>Direct interaction between volunteers to develop the research</p>  <p>Interaction with others to discuss and present what they have been researching</p>	<p>How? Organization: Meetings and practical activities regarding people interested in the topic. Where? Mainly in Pasila</p>
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Costs and investments: Sometimes, funding



Example: Urine utilized as fertilizer, initiated by a desire to recycle urine's nutrient components (nitrogen and phosphorus). One of the research projects developed to accomplish a closed loop for the greenhouse (an aim set from the beginning).
Where? When? The research started in 2014 and is still ongoing, with improvements in the formula necessary for the plants' nutrition. The left side of the greenhouse uses the experimental fertilizer for the vegetables growing there. A urinal close to the dry toilet is used to collect the urine for the experiment.

Card number: 4	Activity: Projects with external partners
<p>What? Short description of the activity: Projects that the urban farmers carry out with international partners so as to learn from each other about their practices.</p>	

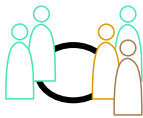

Why? Motive: knowledge sharing, spreading

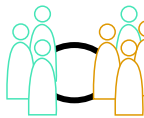
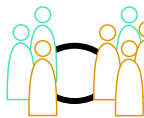

<p>Who? Actors:</p>  <p>Volunteers/members, other activists/national or international partners</p>	<p>How? Organization: This activity always has someone in charge leading the group. Other roles or participation in the activities are open to others: giving lectures or sharing what they do (e.g. showing the different gardens, like Kääntöpöytä and Kalasatama, giving lectures providing more specific information than is included in the guides, etc). Sharing knowledge and experiences with other national or international partners. Where? Mainly in Pasila</p>
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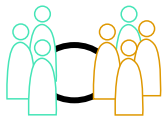

Costs and investments: Funding

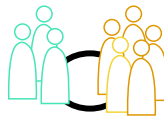





Example: International EU-funded project: 'New Flavour'. International partners (Lithuania, Turkey, Hungary, and Latvia) and members of the urban farmers group (Finland) sharing experiences to develop ideas for cooperative learning and teaching; regarding active citizenship, sustainable lifestyles and environmental awareness locally and globally.
Where? When? Once at Kääntöpöytä and other venues, during the first meeting of the project, when the partners met in Helsinki.

Card number: 5	Activity: Renting desks (at Dodo's office)
<p>What? Short description of the activity: Dodo's office moved to the same premises as the greenhouse during 2015. Since then there have been extra working spaces/desks available for rent. Utilizing Dodo's offices as a co-working space by renting desks not only generates extra income but also attracts possible collaborators and people that work in relevant subject areas (mainly small entrepreneurs that work closely with sustainable or environmental issues).</p>	
<p>Why? Motive: sharing space, sharing knowledge, spreading, networking</p>	
<p>Who? Actors:</p>  <p>Volunteers/members, other activists/entrepreneurs</p>	<p>How? Organization: There are synergies beyond rental of the desks: some of the renters also volunteer at activities held at Kääntöpöytä, and even organize events of their own in the premises. This also creates a network of interest and knowledge.</p> <p>Where? Pasila</p>
<p>Costs and investments: Money exchange</p>	
	<p>Example: Helsieni: "an urban oyster mushroom farm based in Helsinki". This small company sell a 'Growkit' to enable members of the public to grow their mushrooms with coffee grounds. (http://www.helsieni.fi/en/home/)</p> <p>Where? When? All year long, if space is available at Dodo's office in Tallikatu 1 (the same premises as Kääntöpöytä).</p>

Card number: 6	Activity: Brunch
<p>What? Short description of the activity: The greenhouse also functions as a restaurant/cafe. The cafe's menu mainly consists of brunches - a combination of breakfast and lunch - during the season (May to August). Brunches are open to everyone, scheduled in specific dates from the beginning of the year, with two daily services (from 12:00 to 14:00, and 14:00 to 16:00). The customer calls or send an email in advance to reserve a place. The menu is mainly vegetarian/vegan; allergies and intolerances are considered if notified with the booking.</p>	
<p>Why? Motive: cooking, doing, spreading, eating, enjoining</p>	
<p>Who? Actors:</p>  <p>The brunches are primarily prepared by Dodo's volunteers</p>  <p>Sometimes there are brunches during which other activists collaborate on the preparation</p>	<p>How? Organization: Preparation for the service involves collecting materials, and preparing some food one or two days before service, if necessary. Chef: Every brunch has one or two chefs who are in charge of the menu, the kitchen, and suggesting tasks for everyone in a flexible way. For the volunteers: practical activity, from helping in the kitchen (eg. cleaning or chopping vegetables), to serving the customers. Scheduling volunteers' shifts for the brunch and preceding preparations takes place through a Doodle. For the user: they are served.</p> <p>Where? Pasila</p>
<p>Costs and investments: Money exchange</p>	
	<p>Example: 2016 season: there were seven brunches in total; almost two per month.</p> <p>Where? When? Ideally, twice a month, on Sundays at Kääntöpöytä during the season. Food is prepared in the kitchen, which is located in the building next to the greenhouse. The urban farmers group also works with their contacts at the Hakaniemi market, going there to pick up leftover produce.</p>

Card number: 7	Activity: Renting facilities (the greenhouse space)
<p>What? Short description of the activity: As a way to generate extra income Dodo has decided to sub-rent some of their facilities. The greenhouse in particular can be rented by anyone, by the hour or the day.</p>	
<p>Why? Motive: sharing space, spreading, enjoining</p>	
<p>Who? Actors:</p>  <p>Volunteers/members, the general public, other activists, companies</p>	<p>How? Organization: The rent can be purely of the space (customers can, for instance, bring their own crew to work in the kitchen), or there is the possibility to hire a service for the event (from the group). Nevertheless, at least one person from Dodo will be present to help if necessary. This activity mainly involves people from outside of the group.</p> <p>Where? Pasila</p>
<p>Costs and investments: Money exchange</p>	
	<p>Example: Ravintola Hukatila (Restaurant Wasted Space): an pop-up restaurant that offers a fine dining experience but in a different environment.</p> <p>Where? When? During the season, the space is available when there is no Dodo activity scheduled at Turntable. In this case the organizers of Ravintola Hukatila brought their own crew for the kitchen and set the space; also, musicians and customers.</p>


Card number: 8	Activity: Parties
<p>What? Short description of the activity: Parties organized during the season in order to share and enjoy the space. During some of the parties the cafe is open, although it closes before the party ends.</p>	
<p>Why? Motive: sharing space, spreading, enjoining (cooking, eating)</p>	
<p>Who? Actors:</p>  <p>Some parties are organized by Dodo</p>  <p>Others can be in collaboration with other activists</p>	<p>How? Organization: Arrangements about the space (if the tent is needed for instance, or music). Volunteers may come to help with the preparations of the space, and with food (if it is to be sold). Parties are also opened to the public, so are not only for volunteers. However, at the end of the season, and of the year, parties are thrown for the volunteers to celebrate the work that has been done.</p> <p>Where? Pasila</p>
<p>Costs and investments: If the cafe is open, money exchange</p>	
	<p>Example: Dodo's 20th anniversary party in 2015. This gathered the broad Dodo community, including active and inactive members/volunteers, as well as other activists, etc.</p> <p>Where? When? August 2015 at Kääntöpöytä. The restaurant/café was opened for a period to sell vegetarian and vegan burgers. Cake and sparkling wine was shared to celebrate. Volunteers/members helped with the preparations and the cleaning.</p>

Card number: 9	Activity: Collaboration with external partners
<p>What? Short description of the activity: The urban farmers group collaborates with many activists and people doing similar things in Finland (and in this case specifically Helsinki). The collaborations can take different forms, from projects to talks. They propose to integrate the organization or simply collaborate as a partner.</p>	
<p>Why? Motive: knowledge sharing, networking, discussing, enjoining spreading</p>	
<p>Who? Actors:</p>  <p>Volunteers/members, the general public, other activists, researchers, companies</p>	<p>How? Organization: Volunteers, other activists, experts (workshops, lectures), participants interested in the topic Where? Pasila</p>

Costs and investments: If the cafe is open, money exchange

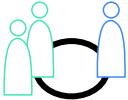
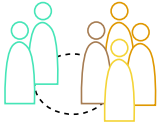





Example: Haarukan jalki, talks and workshops about food security, experts (workshops, lectures), participants in general. Collaboration with Pixelache Helsinki, Ruokan tulevaisuus ry (Future Food Association, who organize Foodycle), SIC! Helsinki 2014 (Social Innovators Connected), Havikki viikko (Food Waste Week), Keko (a project sharing information about dry toilets), Ministry of Foreign Affairs Finland, and Pixelache Helsinki, with other partners such as Aalto University Media Factory and the University of Helsinki.
Where? When? Once a week at Kääntöpöytä during summer of 2014.



Card number: 10	Activity: Workshops
<p>What? Short description of the activity: The urban farmers group held various workshops to share their knowledge with people, and introduce them to ideas for more sustainable day-to-day living.</p>	
<p>Why? Motive: knowledge sharing, enjoining, spreading</p>	
<p>Who? Actors:</p>  <p>Volunteers/members, the general public, other activists</p>	<p>How? Organization: Depending on subject, the workshop could be more or less hands-on, or more like a lecture. Some of the the workshops require registration in advance, while others do not. If the duration is long and they are held at Turntable, the cafe is open to sell food to the participants. Where? Pasila or other venues.</p>
<p>Costs and investments: If the cafe is open, money exchange.</p>	



Example: 'Urban gardening school' is a format that gathers different learning workshops. The idea came from the 'School Festival 2012' organized by the collaboration of Demos Helsinki, Helsinki Festival, Aalto University and Sitra. Initially they used the same format as the 'School Festival 2012' - a school open for anyone to teach - but as they did not receive enough feedback/applications from people they adapted the format. The group in charge of the organization contacts experts or people interested in giving lectures around sustainable urban living (not only urban gardening specifically). The workshop does not require registration in advance, and people can attend the entire activity or select workshops according to their interests.
Where? When? Once a year in May, from 2013 to 2015. Held at Kääntöpöytä.

Card number: 11	Activity: Guides
What? Short description of the activity: Organizing knowledge gained by doing, and proposing printed or virtual material to be distributed among people to enable them to do things by themselves.	
Why? Motive: knowledge sharing, spreading	
Who? Actors:  <p>Experts from the urban farmers group approach authorities</p>  <p>The group interacts indirectly with people, to share their knowledge</p>	How? Organization: Some guides in printed versions, others in downloadable PDF versions. Where? Distributed at some activities, or found online.
Costs and investments: Sometimes, funding from institutions.	
  <p>Opas yhteisö- ja pienpalstaviljelmien perustamiseen Helsingissä</p> 	Example: Guide for the City of Helsinki. A guide about how to start an urban garden that considers the legal position of the city of Helsinki. Project proposed by Dodo to the City of Helsinki. Some expert members of the urban farmers group started the project with the installation of four gardens, in order to understand how people can do this legally – since, initially, most of the gardens initiated were illegal (ie, the space was claimed by the group). The group collaborated with city authorities during this process. Where? When? 2014. The guide is available on Helsinki city's webpage: http://www.hel.fi/static/hkr/julkaisut/2014/viljellaan_kaupungissa_opas_2014.pdf

Card number: 12	Activity: External gardens run by the organization
What? Short description of the activity: Communal gardens, part of a scheme similar to allotment gardens provided by the city: spaces rented for urban agriculture through a small fee to individuals or groups.	
Why? Motive: gardening, facilitating, spreading	
Who? Actors:  <p>Volunteers/members of Dodo interact with other people or organizations that want to rent a space for gardening.</p>	How? Organization: The request for space for gardening is done by email. Working party days are organized by the person in charge of the urban farmers group in spring. Where? Different parts of Helsinki, for instance Kalasatama harbour.
Costs and investments: Money exchange through rent of the bags/boxes	
	Example: Kalasatama garden Where? When? Kalasatama harbour construction space. Started in 2010 as part of the 'Kalasatama temporary' initiative as a bags garden, with 80 bags which increased to 180 bags. The bags can be rented by anyone (individuals or groups) for a small fee. Recently (2015) the garden was moved because of changes to the construction site, with 180 wooden boxes replacing the bags.

Card number: 13		Activity: Supporting external gardens	
What? Short description of the activity: Help others to start their own gardens. This activity may have greater or lesser participation from Dodo's members: in some cases the consultation period takes longer, whereas in others it is just a beginning. The help ranges from practical, like the construction of bigger wooden boxes, or answering questions about gardening matters and crops.			
Why? Motive: sharing knowledge, gardening, doing, spreading			
Who? Actors:  Volunteers/members, the general public (schools, communities, neighbors), other activists, organizations, companies		How? Organization: Those who want to set up the garden initiate the process by contacting a Dodo member. The level of help given depends on the project. More recently, some gardens have been begun with Dodo's help, but only indirectly, through the use of the guides produced by the urban farmers group. Where? All around Helsinki	
Costs and investments: Sometimes, money exchange			
		Example: Hermann garden Where? When? Situated in Hermann, this communal garden started in November of 2013 is one of four examples shown in the 'urban farming guide' for the City of Helsinki. Although the garden is technically illegal, the group wanted to show it because it is planted directly into the ground. Some members of Dodo are active participants in this garden.	

| Process of analysis of activity cards

| Analysis of activity cards with Interaction maps

Interactions are a crucial aspect of the activities, defining how they are performed. Activities enable different level of collaboration, as well as engage internal and external actors. However, the roles of such actors shifts and blur, making the interpretation harder to qualify. Hence, even if the analysis of the actors' relationships implies a broad and simplistic explanation, it is still important to recognize the main characteristics of the interactions that the activities generate. Consequently, interactions are explored so as to better understand the synergies within the activities.

I analysed the interactions through maps developed by Manzini (2015): Participant Involvement (PI) and Quality Interactions (QI) maps. Manzini (2015) defines four possible types of "collaborative encounters" and divides them into two sets: active involvement and collaborative involvement (operational characteristics), and social-tie strength and relational intensity (nature of the interactions). The first two operational characteristics are the axes of the Participant Involvement map (PI), while the latter two define the axes of the Quality Interactions (QI) map. These maps assist in visualizing different possibilities within the interactions (ie, if they are closer to service provision or to co-production) and the modalities of the interactions (from weak to strong formalized or relational ties).

Hence, I map the 13 different activities of the Dodo urban farmers group repertoire by understanding the type of interaction (PI map) to then explore the ties which the actors generates with such activities (IQ map). It is important to note that the analysis is made from the point of view of the initiative, how I interpret it from the materials collected. As the activities are numerous, the explanation of the analysis will explore only the five different cards.

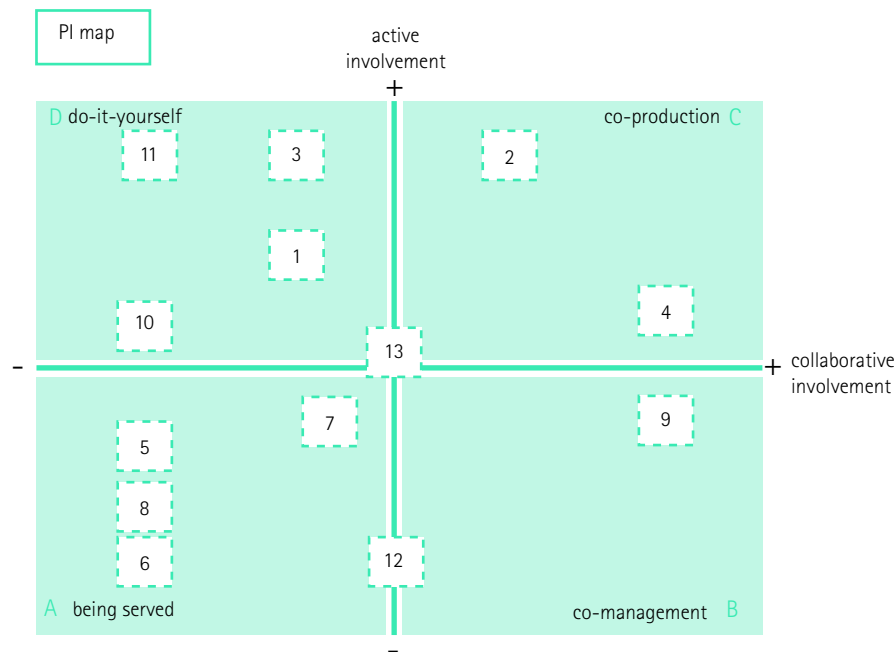


Figure 40: Participant involvement map showing how people are involved in the initiative through its activities.

The Participant Involvement map gives information about how people participate. Here in figure 40 we can see, for instance, that in the Brunch (6) the involvement of the user could be low in relation with the high degree of involvement of someone that is participating in a Gardening shift (1).

Talkoots (2) are the activities that require most active involvement (both collectively and individually), and where the person can actively modify or create their own tasks. External gardens run by the organization (12), like the Kalasatama garden, are in between co-management and being served, as the scheme is similar to allotment gardens. The Workshops (10) have similar level of collaborative participation as the Brunches (6), but with a much more active involvement. However, if, instead of participatory workshops driven by a do-it-yourself ethos, the format is more like a lecture, then both activities start becoming closer together in terms of active involvement.

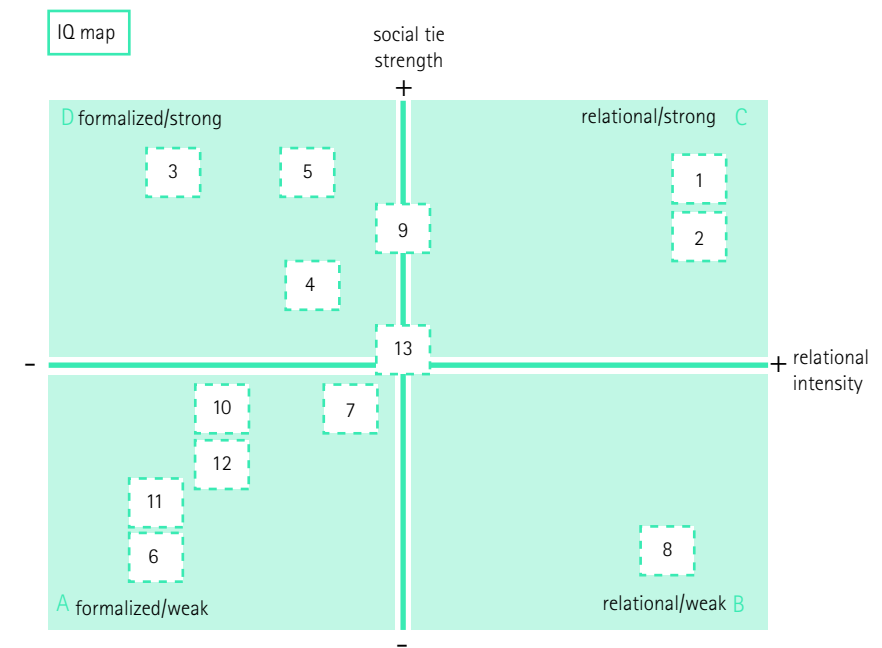


Figure 41: Interaction quality map showing the nature and quality of interactions' social ties during activities.

The Interaction Quality map (figure 41) can contribute to visualizing the ties and relationships generated by each activity,. Talkoots (2) and people engaged in the Gardening shifts (1) have a relationship with strong ties and intensity. The same level of intensity in relationships and social ties can be observed between the coordinators, members of the board, chefs and volunteers/members active during the season. The user/consumer of the Brunch (6) has a weak relationship since the brunch works according to the same model as conventional restaurants: they are being served. This relationship could change if the user happens to be another activist or a volunteer/member. The users of the External gardens run by the organization (12) and the Workshops (10) can have the same kind of formalized but weak tie. Of course, this may also change if the user is closer to the initiative, but here I am working on the assumption of an unrelated member of the public.

| Analysis around 'shaping urban dynamics'

| Initial analysis identifying three larger themes

For my first attempt at classifying the activities (that can be seen in figure 42) I followed the aforementioned approach. I situated the activities that I found closer to the 'place', building a community around it under community building and placemaking. Under facilitating and promoting I placed the activities that for me are more related to sharing knowledge and/or space with others. Lastly, I placed the activities that for me give people the possibility of developing their own thinking and doing under empowering people.

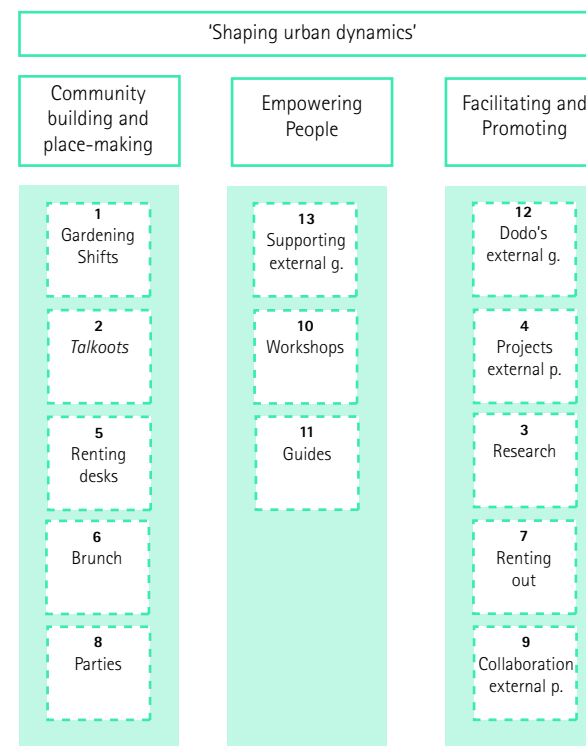


Figure 42: Activities clustered by larger themes

| Activity at Dodo's ORG days

I had the possibility of sharing part of my work with the Dodo ORG days. This year these were organized during the first weekend of October (Saturday 1st and Sunday 2nd) at Kääntöpöytä. To gain some feedback from the activities cards I engage members with a short activity during Saturday evening.

For this activity I decided to work with the activity cards, because I wanted to assess the cards' usefulness as a tool for the group to think about their activities.

The inventory of activity cards that I propose is extensive, and the cards are detailed in order to understand the activities better. My intention for this encounter was to understand more about the activities, their motives (what each activity brings to the actors involved), and if the group members could classify the activities into the three larger categories, as I had clustered them. I therefore prepared two set of summarized activity cards, with the three larger issues (empowering people; facilitating and promoting; and enabling interactions through community building and placemaking) and a printed list of the activities and the motives.



Figure 43,44 and 45,46: The two groups (43, 44 relate to group one, 45, 46 to group two) of Dodo members analyzing the activity cards during Dodo's ORG days. October 1st at Kääntöpöytä.

From the experience of the ORG days I noticed that for the two groups clustering the summarized activity cards under the three larger themes seemed the easiest task. However, I also noticed how challenging this could be: one group added new categories and the other placed some of the cards in-between the three themes as they could not assign them to just one. The task of assigning motives was deemed more difficult, not only because elements overlapped but because motive can change depending on point of view (user, volunteer, etc). A later discussion addressed how hard it was for the participants to analyze and synthesize their own practices. Personally, the activity made me reflect once again about the difficulties of synthesising activities that are both so complex and so fluid. It also caused me to question important issues such as the relevance of economical considerations (since many decisions the group has to take are based on their economical resources: funding for projects, memberships, renting the facilities of the greenhouse, etc).

Though the group members appreciated that the activity I proposed was exacting and well explained, they acknowledged that analysis is a hard task. Nevertheless, they stated that "it is nice to have challenges". What they appreciated most was that I shared what I was doing with them, so having been involved in part of the process they are awaiting the end results.

| Further analysis: feedback and my own evaluation

Thanks to the feedback I obtained during the activity at the ORG days, I was able to compare similar and dissimilar views of the group's projects: not only from the two groups that participated, but also with my own (figure 47).

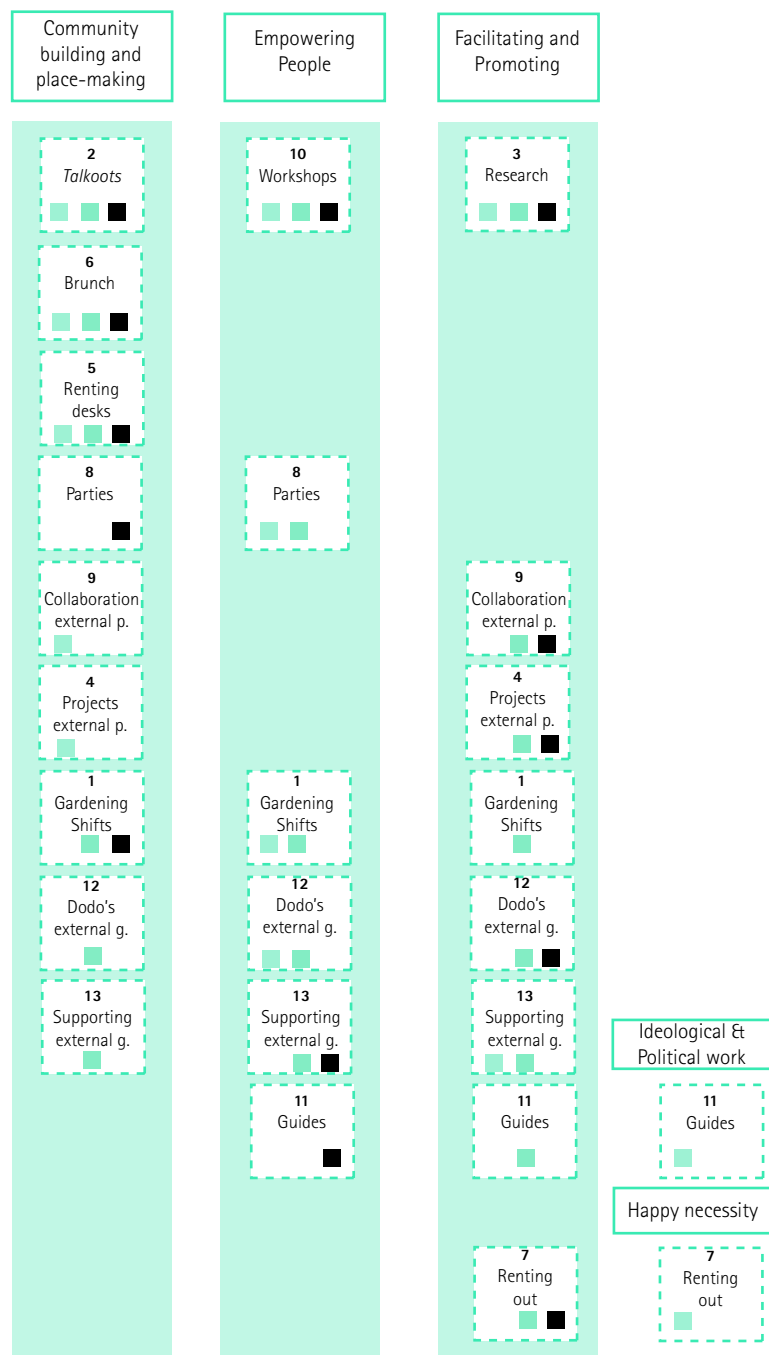


Figure 47: Comparison of the results of the activity done at ORG days by the two groups of urban farmers with my own clustering of the group's projects (green: group 1 and group 2; black: my own classification).

For activities such as the brunches or workshops the groups and I had similar views of how to classify them, while, with others, like the guides, we vary completely - with one group even adding a specific category for them ('ideological & political work' and 'happy necessity'). Nevertheless, there is still the question of whether, in the activities on which we coincided, we were all thinking about the same actors (some activities can vary greatly regarding which actor is taken into account).

The community building and placemaking category overlaps easily with facilitating and promoting, and as such these were the two themes many of the activities were placed under (sometimes with totally different views and others matching one or more of the groups).

Empowering people was the hardest of the three (it is the theme with the fewest activities classified under it), and one of the groups felt that the word 'empower' was too "strong". However, I think that by creating their own model and archive of knowledge led by experimentation - learning by doing - and sharing this knowledge with people will give a motivation to empower people, in some way, in everything they do.

Personally, this exercise not only helped me to gain understanding of the cards, but to reflect upon the different views within Dodo and how my own understanding of the initiative was aligned with their views - or otherwise.

Timeline

